

felt perfectly well. The rash disappeared gradually and was gone in two days, leaving no desquamation. Very little chloroform was given, no drugs were administered, and there was no alteration in diet.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Ramsgate, Dec. 7th, 1901. H. W. REYNOLDS, M.B., B.Sc.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—In respect to your note to my communication published in THE LANCET of Nov. 30th, p. 1531, recording the occurrence of a rash after tonsillotomy, I trust that you will permit me to answer your inquiries and to explain that I omitted the details you mention because they seemed of quite negative value. No drugs whatever were being taken. The only change of diet was the usual one of placing the patient on fluid food for a short time after the operation. Chloroform was the anæsthetic employed. It is, of course, often most difficult directly to associate cause and effect, but in this case there was no obvious reason for the eruption apart from operation, and I therefore felt justified in regarding it as an instance of "tonsillotomy rash," of which Wingrave recorded 30 cases in the *Laryngoscope* of July, 1901.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
H. W. HENSHAW, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond.,  
Kew, Dec. 10th, 1901. D.P.H. Lond.

## AN ELECTRO-THERAPEUTICAL SOCIETY.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I was pleased to see in THE LANCET of Dec. 7th, p. 1611, a letter from Mr. Chisholm Williams asking for support in the formation of a society for those practising electro-therapeutics. In this country we are sadly behind many of our continental neighbours in the use of the physical forces in the treatment of disease and this is more especially the case with electricity. Hitherto it has been left to the few who have learned to appreciate the immense value of the intelligent use of electricity in medical treatment to combat as best they can the grave prejudice existing in the mass of the profession against what may be called electrical treatment. Such a society, if well supported, should do much to rescue electro-therapeutics from the lay "medical electrician" and the vendor of the so-called "electric" belts. As one who has for many years worked in this field, and who relies largely upon electricity as a therapeutic agent, I shall be pleased to give such a society every help in my power.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
RICHARD J. COWEN, L.R.C.P. Irel., &c.  
Clarges-street, Mayfair, W., Dec. 9th, 1901.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—Referring to Mr. Chisholm Williams's letter of last week suggesting the formation of a new society, will you allow me to say that the council of the Röntgen Society have for some time past been considering the advisability of enlarging its scope so as to include the investigation of other radiations than those immediately connected with its name. The president in the address he delivered on Nov. 7th last expressed these views somewhat fully and it has since been decided to carry them out and the question of a possible modification in the name of the society is also under consideration. The object Mr. Williams desires to effect by forming a special medical society has not been lost sight of, but it is felt that the new therapeutic agents such as high-frequency electric currents, Finsen light, &c., call for so much further investigation that it would not be wise—certainly at present—to exclude the valuable help of physicists who have leisure to undertake such inquiries, few medical men having the time at their disposal for original research. This plan has worked very well in our society in the matter of x rays, the result being that the medical profession has now in its hands better apparatus and fuller knowledge than would have been possible had there not been the coöperation of which I speak.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Dec. 9th, 1901. J. J. VEZEY,  
Honorary Treasurer to the Röntgen Society.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I trust that the scheme spoken of by Mr. Chisholm Williams in THE LANCET of Dec. 7th (p. 1611) will bear

practical fruit. An electro-therapeutical society is really wanted.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Dec. 12th, 1901. M.B.

\*\*\* A society which would bring together those who are working at the subject of medical electricity might be a useful thing, although we are always a little loth to recommend the addition of a new scientific society to the already lengthy list of such bodies. But additions to the ranks of those interested in electricity have been numerous lately and it may reasonably be supposed that there are now enough to keep a special society alive. Of matters to be discussed there is no lack; what is required is a gathering of persons qualified to discuss them.—ED. L.

## THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHLOROFORM.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—In THE LANCET of Nov. 23rd, p. 1418, is an account of the opening meeting of the Society of Anæsthetists. The difference of opinion expressed shows the lack of clear thought that exists in the profession with regard to the safe administration of chloroform. In no one instance was *personal* experience advanced. Observation is one thing; to speak from actual personal knowledge in conjunction with observation is another. It seems to me that a multiplicity of words only fogs the subject and that the matter is in a nutshell. At any rate, I am ready at any time to prove before any number of the profession that chloroform *when properly administered* is, and ought to be, free from danger and all bad after-effects worth naming. This I am willing to demonstrate by taking it to the stage of surgical anæsthesia by a *Krohne inhaler* and then getting up and riding away on my tricycle. Surely it is time this question should be definitely settled so that the public may always have it rightly administered. The whole question is one of overdosing.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

C. J. HARRIS, M.R.C.S. Eng., &c.  
Kilburn Priory, N.W., Dec. 3rd, 1901.

## AN UNDESCRIBED (?) SYMPTOM IN WHOOPING-COUGH.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I should like to draw the attention of your readers to a symptom which I have both experienced and observed in whooping-cough and which, if it receives corroboration, may prove of assistance in the diagnosis of this very troublesome disease. I had the misfortune last summer to contract whooping-cough from a hospital case and subsequently to infect my two children. In my own case I had the usual preliminary catarrhal stage, followed by paroxysmal cough, the fits being so prolonged as to result on one occasion in the rupture of some fibres of one of the abdominal muscles. During the whole course of the illness—some seven or eight weeks—I whooped only twice or three times. But after every paroxysm of at all a severe nature a series of what one might perhaps call deglutition spasms set in, and I had to gulp down saliva as quickly as possible for a minute or two, the interval between the gulps gradually lengthening and the paroxysm finally passing off.

I found it quite impossible to control these gulps, though I tried hard. The sensation was a most unpleasant one as were also the consequences, for one's stomach became largely filled with air. I noticed the same symptoms in both of my children though only at such times as they did not whoop. I also observed it in two children at the Stockport Fever Hospital, again at times when they did not whoop. Apart from this symptom all the cases mentioned were quite typical. I do not find any mention of this symptom in Fagge, Goodhart, Taylor, Watson, or Carter, and none of the medical friends to whom I have spoken have ever observed it. It appears to me, however, that it is worth while bringing it to the notice of your readers in order to see whether it has been observed and recorded before or not. My own experience of it was quite sufficient to impress me with its unmistakeable character.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Stockport, Dec. 5th, 1901. MEREDITH YOUNG, M.D. Edin.

## UNDERFED CHILDREN IN THE BOARD AND VOLUNTARY LONDON SCHOOLS.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—Will you permit me once more to appeal to the charitable public through your columns on behalf of the funds of the London Schools Dinner Association? That association provides cheap or free meals for underfed children in the board and voluntary schools of London. The grants which it makes for that purpose are administered by local committees upon which the managers and teachers are represented. These committees ascertain by proper inquiry that the need of application for relief is real and undertake the economical provision and distribution of suitable food.

Last winter the underfed children in 181 schools were thus relieved, under the administrative control of 79 local committees. About 660,000 meals were provided, of which 102,800 were paid for wholly or partly, by the recipients. The total receipts from donations were £1186, but the amount spent in the provision of meals alone was £1286. This is the third year in which the necessary expenditure of the association has exceeded its income. The total deficit for that period now amounts to more than £700, and the accumulations of earlier years, when income exceeded expenditure, are now practically exhausted. Unless, therefore, the association receives a substantial increase of income at an early date, its necessary and beneficent work will have to be curtailed.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to "The London Schools Dinners Association," and crossed "Barclay & Co.," and forwarded to the Secretary, 117, School Board Offices, Victoria Embankment, W.C.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

REAY,  
Chairman of the School Board for London.

## THE LATE R. B. ANDERSON FUND.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—With reference to the affairs of the late Mr. R. B. Anderson, it may be within the recollection of your readers that in July last we made an appeal to the profession for subscriptions towards the support of his widow and their twin sons. This subscription now amounts to about £80, a very inadequate sum; but the committee feel that it is useless to keep the fund open much longer. It has therefore been decided to close it on Wednesday, Jan. 8th, 1902, and to make an earnest appeal in the meanwhile for further donations. The amount realised will at once be sent out to the island of Tobago to be used for the benefit of Mrs. Anderson and her two sons at the discretion of the Warden of that island. We may add, in view of a rumour which has prevailed that the Civil Rights Defence Committee was dissolved in consequence of some misconduct on Mr. Anderson's part, that the only reason for the dissolution of that committee was its failure to collect, in the time given for that purpose, the funds required for the contemplated appeal to the Privy Council.

Donations are to be marked "for the late R. B. Anderson Fund," and to be sent, and cheques, &c., made payable, to the Manager, Union Bank of London, Chancery-lane, London, W.C. They will be duly acknowledged.

We are, Sirs, yours faithfully,

STAMFORD, Chairman.

Dec. 9th, 1901.

TIMOTHY HOLMES, Hon. Treasurer.

## THE DANGERS OF A COMMON COLD.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—The evidence that all colds are infectious and that without the presence of infection it is impossible to catch a cold is probably far stronger than your correspondent Dr. Clayton Jones thinks. Colds are almost unknown in the Arctic Circle, not on account of the action of the continuous cold, but because the greater part of that region is uninhabited. When Sir William Conway and his men were exploring Spitzbergen, though they were exposed to great privations and were almost constantly wet through, they never caught a cold, but directly they came down to Andrée's

settlement on the coast, where some 40 men were living in almost constant intercourse with the mainland, they all developed violent colds. Nansen and his men never caught a cold during all the three years of his voyage, notwithstanding the utmost exposure, but directly they reached civilisation on the coast of Norway, though still within the Arctic Circle, they all suffered badly from colds. The weather is not always keen and bracing in the Arctic regions; during the summer-time in Franz Josef Land, at any rate, it is exceedingly damp, and raw mist-laden east winds prevail; yet the members of the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition never caught a cold there, though all but two of them did so directly they reached civilisation. More noteworthy still were Conway's experiences in the Himalayas. While amongst the mountains he and his men, notwithstanding great exposure, never caught colds; nor did they even when they visited the small remote native villages; but once they came down to a village where there was a small European settlement in communication with the outer world, and there they all took bad colds. Nor is it only in the Arctic regions and amongst high mountains that colds are absent; the same immunity from them is noticeable during long sea voyages and when camping out in the desert; and, still more unexpectedly, in the best open-air sanatoriums, such as Nordrach, where the ventilation is practically perfect, it is found that the patients do not catch cold. There is, I believe, plenty of other evidence to show that there are places remote from ordinary human life where colds cannot be caught whatever the exposure; probably many of your readers can bring forward instances. On the other hand, that ordinary colds are in the highest degree infectious is now becoming a matter of common knowledge, and any medical man if he goes about with open eyes can collect evidence for himself. I have watched a cold pass from house to house and have even traced it from one village to another and have listened, not without some amusement, while the different sufferers from it have explained to me just how they caught it—asccribing it to some open window, change of garment, or other fancied imprudence. I know houses where all the members of the household, including visitors and children, are constantly catching colds, and they are not the airy or even the draughty houses, but stuffy, grimy, badly ventilated, and dark ones. No doubt it is possible to have an inflammation of the nasal mucous membrane, as of the conjunctiva, from some simple irritant, but such an event is rare, whereas the ordinary infectious cold is by far the commonest of all diseases. Surely, therefore, it is important that its infectiousness should be frankly recognised.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Shrewsbury, Dec. 3rd, 1901.

H. WILLOUGHBY GARDNER.

## MR. HORSLEY'S ELECTIONEERING SPEECHES.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I have only to say in reply to Mr. Horsley's personal abuse of me, reported in your columns last week, that my letter on pp. 1374-75 of THE LANCET of Nov. 16th remains unanswered. Had Mr. Horsley's hands been clean it was open to him to refute the statements therein before the election, and especially the paragraph commencing: "I am much surprised at Mr. Horsley's attitude towards the sitting Direct Representatives." His lame defence before the Council proves that there was not a word of truth in his allegations against his colleagues, and particularly Mr. George Brown, against whom he now admits they were directed.<sup>1</sup> As to the rest, it can stand over until Mr. Horsley comes up for judgment before the constituency next year.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Liverpool, Dec. 7th, 1901.

ALEX. MCCOOK WEIR.

## A MEDICAL DEGREE FOR LONDON STUDENTS.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I beg to suggest that now is a most favourable opportunity for the London University and the Royal Colleges to formulate some scheme for the institution of a pass degree in medicine for London students. The exigencies of the situation are pressing. I submit that

<sup>1</sup> Vide Brit. Med. Jour., Nov. 23rd, p. 1544, and Dec. 7th, p. 1713.