

The difficulty is that there is no law about it at all. The question of fresh effluvia emanating from a w.c. into a dwelling house and contaminating the air of it, to the injury of health, is a matter on which doctors widely differ, as they sometimes do on more vital questions.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

PETER FYFE,

Sanitary Department, Glasgow, Dec. 5th, 1888. Sanitary Inspector.

# THE NEW WAY OF RAISING THE EPIGLOTTIS ETC. BY UTMOST MANUAL EXTENSION OF HEAD AND NECK, AND THE RECENT ADJOURNED DISCUSSION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In the accurate report in THE LANCET of the 24th ult. of the recent adjourned discussion at the Medical Society of London appears an apology from me made under false impressions, and which is so inconsistent with the title of my paper, "On a new and only way of Raising the Epiglottis," that I must beg a short space in your valuable columns for a correction.

On reference to the report of the adjourned discussion, it will be seen that, although Mr. T. C. Bryant, of Guy's Hospital, who had been kind enough to watch some of my work at the time, said "the facts submitted were supported by demonstrations upon the dead body," and that "he was quite prepared to endorse Dr. Howard's remarks, or most of them"; while Sir William MacCormac related a recent case of his own exactly corroborating these facts; though Mr. Lennox Browne related an experience which "supported Dr. Howard's contention"; while Mr. Knowsley Thornton said, "Dr. Howard had a perfect right to speak of his way as a new method;" and though during the entire discussion not a single point as to the facts or their alleged purport was for a moment in dispute;—notwithstanding all this, in the body of my closing remarks will be found a very complete apology from me for having apparently overlooked the claims of a prior or contemporaneous worker on similar lines, and robbed him of the credit due to him. This apology was elicited by a surprise, and was given without reflection, in consequence of an impressive speech to that effect generously made by Mr. Knowsley Thornton on behalf of a friend who had been notified of the coming discussion, but was absent. The complaint in question was based upon a "paper" in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal*—a proposed instrument in that connexion—and a case. On an examination since, I find not one of these things mentioned in the index of the journal in question, and that no such "paper" or abstract of such a "paper" is there published. As regards the case, it seems to have been reported specially to illustrate the relative superiority of my own method of artificial respiration, which, in contrast to Silvester's in another case mentioned, seems to have been employed with striking success on that occasion.

These events do not date back ten years ago as stated. The quotations made in support of supposed claims were, I find, made correctly, not from a "paper," however, but from remarks made at meetings on May 5th and on July 7th respectively in 1880. The case—the experience in which seems to have been the source of whatever followed at subsequent meetings—was described in the course of a discussion some months before, or on March 5th, 1880. On that the earliest occasion or event referred to by Mr. Thornton's friend, he is reported in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* to have said: "He had the greatest faith in Howard's method, and related this case to show how efficient it is in urgent cases of asphyxia, however produced." A recognition of the value of head and neck extension long ago by Mr. Thornton's friend seems correct, for, in accordance with my old directions for passive extension, he said: "Two pillows were placed under the shoulders, and the head allowed to fall well back, when 'the air rushed into the chest in a manner delightful to observe.'" Further: "He mentioned this case to show the great value of a particular method of artificial respiration in a case of greatest urgency, where, as in this case, e.g., the patient could not be moved," for "he had no hesitation in saying that Howard's method saved the patient's life." I by no means wish to be understood as making a complaint myself, but as I privately promised Mr. Thornton I would make even further public correction as the facts on examina-

tion might seem to allow, I cannot excuse myself from doing so, simply because the nature of the correction is so very different from what I was so ready to think it would have to be. Between these facts and what I was led for the moment to suppose them to be the discrepancy is unfortunately great and amazing. In view of the facts, my apology is so absurdly contradictory and misleading, I have no choice but to retract it.

I hope I shall be excused for having recalled some of the forgotten statements made at the time in the account of the above case, the report of which was both new and interesting to me, and for the results in which Mr. Thornton's friend, as well as myself, cannot, I am sure, but feel grateful.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

London, Dec. 6th, 1888.

BENJAMIN HOWARD.

## SIR MORELL MACKENZIE AND THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON.

THE Registrar presents his compliments to the Editors of THE LANCET, and will feel obliged by their insertion in the next issue of the journal of the following letter which appeared in *The Times* of the 12th inst. (to-day):—

To the Editor of *The Times*.

Sir,—The following paragraph appeared in the second edition of the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 8th inst.:—

"George Fitz-James Daker, M.D., F.R.C.S., of St. Thomas's Hospital, who was present at the conclave at the College of Physicians when the decree to boycott Sir Morell Mackenzie was drawn up, writes as follows: 'At that meeting I (in company with five or six others) protested against the decision arrived at—namely, to advise our colleagues in Edinburgh not to recognise Sir M. Mackenzie's visit to that city. I consider this boycotting of an eminent medical man a mean and cowardly action, and unworthy of the profession to which I have the honour to belong.'"

The answer to this statement is full and conclusive.

1. No question relating to Sir Morell Mackenzie has been discussed by the College of Physicians. 2. No meeting of the College has taken place since Oct. 25th last. 3. No communications have passed between this College and any other corporate body or persons on the subject. 4. Dr. Daker is quite unknown to the College, and could not have been present at any meeting whatever of that body, had such taken place; moreover, his name does not appear on the Medical Register.

There is, therefore, no foundation whatever for the paragraph quoted, which appears to have been designed for some other purpose than the furtherance of justice and truth.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY A. PITMAN, Registrar.

Royal College of Physicians, London, S.W., Dec. 11th.

## LIVERPOOL.

(From our own Correspondent.)

### THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

MR. JUSTICE WILLS, in charging the Grand Jury at the Assizes now sitting here, referred to the valuable assistance afforded by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in taking up cases where there appeared to be gross parental neglect. Although the Society has been in existence some years and its formation was followed by that of a similar society in London, the learned judge stated that he had never heard of it before. The Society acts in a double capacity, not only as public prosecutors in cases where cruelty by commission or omission has been proved, but also in deterring others from committing similar offences.

### TYPHOID FEVER AT ST. HELENS.

For some time past there has been a severe epidemic of typhoid fever at St. Helens, several leading inhabitants having fallen victims to it, while others who have been infected are happily recovering. Dr. Garton, who has been in attendance on some of the patients, was himself taken ill, but this appears to have been from overwork.

### DEATH OF THE MAYOR OF BIRKENHEAD.

Within a month of being elected to the office of Mayor of Birkenhead, Mr. Frederick Smith, alderman of that borough,