

regard to all the facts, including the clinical features of the cases, it seems to us that the weight of evidence is clearly in favour of the probable correctness of the serological diagnoses. .... This investigation yields a tentative answer (to the question of the probable proportion of enteric infections among cases of undiagnosed pyrexia among our armies in France) which will be confirmed or refuted by the accumulation of evidence obtained by other workers."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

W. W. C. TOPLEY.

Institute of Pathology, Charing Cross Hospital  
Medical School, Jan. 15th, 1921.

## THE INSURANCE MEDICAL RECORDS.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Your leading article in THE LANCET for Jan. 8th will cause considerable distress, a great deal of irritation and ill-feeling among medical men, and particularly in the section unfortunately situated as "panel practitioners." The records are of the most foolish type for statistics; they were never submitted for the approval or otherwise of those who have to keep them, and many, if not most, will consider they are being put to do, at a great expense of time, very useless work. But the chief feeling caused by your article will be that you should lend your journal for propaganda work which is far from the interests of, I hope, a great proportion of your readers and to lend your pages for an article apparently written by one who will never be called upon to keep these records or to sign insurance patients' certificates. Personally I always thought THE LANCET was a "cut" above the tone adopted, which savours of Government contamination.

I am sure that if you, Sir, will put the question in your next issue, and allow it to be answered by post-card, there will be very few panel practitioners found in favour of the present type of records, which, I believe, are to cost the country in taxes another £30,000 a year.—I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Kencott, Glos., Jan. 17th, 1921.

F. W. PILKINGTON.

\* \* The form of the records is imposed by the need to limit the clerical labours, inasmuch as the records on ethical grounds must be kept by practitioners. We agree that in fuller shape such information would have far greater scientific value. Our correspondent has not read very carefully the article which he condemns, or he would have seen how far we are at one with him.—ED. L.

## POST-OPERATIVE MORTALITY OF APPENDICITIS.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Dr. Herbert H. Brown, writing in association with Mr. H. M. Cade on this subject in THE LANCET for Jan. 15th, provides food for serious thought. He states that during the first 48 hours after the commencement of a case and also during the second week, when an abscess may have formed, operation is practically safe, but during the intervening period there is great danger, even to the extent of 22·7 per cent. of a fatal issue. Those among us who can look back for 30 or 40 years to a time when the terms typhilitis and perityphilitis were in common use will remember cases of complete recovery after large swellings in the region of the right iliac fossa, and which under watchful and expectant treatment wholly disappeared, leaving no ill-results. My practice has always been to watch cases carefully, and not to advise operation until I have considered it necessary, and as over a period of 40 years I can recall no fatal case in my practice I am inclined to think there are people living who if they had been hurried off for operation would have helped to swell the high death-rate. It is quite certain that in general practice the great majority of cases will not come under the surgeon's hands within the first 48 hours, and in face of the statistics given in Dr. Brown's article it surely is both logically and morally wrong to put any patient to so great a risk during the dangerous period, except in very urgent cases.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

F. L. NICHOLLS, O.B.E.

Fulbourn, near Cambridge, Jan. 19th, 1921.

## MEDICAL PRACTICE BY FOREIGNERS IN SPAIN.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—In your issue of Jan. 1st (p. 58) you give the conditions as laid down by an old law which has just been rescinded by a Royal decree of Dec. 27th, 1920, owing to agitation by the Spanish medical profession. Foreigners will now only be admitted to practice in Spain if their respective countries give equal facilities to Spanish medical men, otherwise they must go through the whole course of study. The Royal decree translated reads as follows:—

Art. (1) The Article 96 of the law of public instruction of the year 1857 is re-established in all its vigour and effect, so far as it refers to temporal registration of diplomas obtained in foreign countries authorising practice in Spain.

(2) The Ministers of Public Instruction and Fomento (agriculture, engineering, &c.) in future can only authorise the registration of diplomas of the following professions: medical, dental, engineering, and foremen of mines, to such, in whose own country, diplomas conferred in Spain for the said professions will be recognised for registration and permission to practise.

(3) As soon as the time expires of authorised foreign diplomas of above professions such authorisation lapses.

(4) Any existing decree opposing the present to be null and void.

This decision is of importance to the medical profession in your country.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

C. W. HUYSEN,

Surgeon to Rio-Tinto Cos. Hospital in Huelva.

Huelva, Jan. 8th, 1921.

## Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—A quarterly meeting of the Council was held on Jan. 13th, Sir Anthony Bowlby being in the chair.—The President reported that the Prince of Wales would be present at the Hunterian festival dinner on Feb. 14th to receive the Diploma of Honorary Fellowship, to which His Royal Highness was elected on July 24th, 1919.—A vote of congratulation was passed to Sir Charles Ryall on having received the honour of knighthood.—Mr. C. H. Fagge was introduced and admitted a member of the Court of Examiners.—Reports were read from the secretary of the Conjoint Examining Board respecting candidates found qualified for the Diploma of Public Health of the two Colleges, for the Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and for the Diploma in Psychological Medicine. A list of the successful candidates is given below.—A letter was read from Mr. Philip Franklin stating that the Onodi Collection of Nasal Anatomy had been purchased by the Onodi Committee with the object of presenting it to the Royal College of Surgeons of England. It was agreed, on the recommendation of the Museum Committee, that Mr. Philip Franklin be informed that the Council is willing to accept the Onodi collection and to undertake the responsibility of preparing and mounting the specimens for exhibition in the Museum, and that he be requested to convey to the donors the thanks of the Council. The Conservator expressed the opinion that it would take the greater part of two years for the Museum Prosector to prepare the specimens for exhibition, and that the cost of their preparation would amount to about £650.—A report was received from the Finance Committee recommending a rearrangement of fees payable for admission to the several examinations for the Licence in Dental Surgery. This was adopted and was rendered necessary by a revision of the Regulations made by the Council on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners in Dental Surgery. Under these revised Regulations the examinations in General and Dental Anatomy and Physiology are separated from the examinations in General and Dental Surgery and Pathology, and now form Part III. of the First Professional Examination for the Licence, and candidates may enter for examination in these subjects after completing six months' study during the ordinary sessions at a recognised medical and dental school.—Mr. W. G. Spencer was reappointed member of the Central Council for District Nursing in London for three years from Jan. 1st, 1921.—Sir William Thorburn was appointed a member of the Court of the University of Liverpool for three years from Jan. 1st, 1921.—On a motion of Sir George Makins a committee was appointed to consider the question of establishing additional examinations in Ophthalmology and in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology for candidates who desire to take them after having passed the examination for the Fellowship.

Diplomas in Psychological Medicine, in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and in Public Health were conferred (conjointly