

alterations are necessary in the conditions under which anæsthesia is now conducted by those whose right to administer anæsthetics cannot be questioned. But let us deal with irregular practice first, and thus lay the foundation of a new and better order of things for the future.

The second point raised by Mr. Nelson Hardy is whether or not the use of *methylated* chloroform introduces a risk into chloroform anæsthesia which is absent when ethylated or ethylic alcohol chloroform is used. Mr. Nelson Hardy implies that this is the case, and in support of his thesis he mentions the fact brought to light some years ago that at a certain London hospital where methylated chloroform was used more anæsthetic fatalities had occurred in a certain number of years than at another hospital of about the same size where it was customary to use ethyl-alcohol chloroform. But if Mr. Nelson Hardy will go more carefully into the matter he will find that there was a far more important difference than this in the conditions under which anæsthetics were administered in these two institutions. In the one in which the larger number of accidents arose no special attention was paid to what may be termed the personal factor in anæsthetising—that is to say, anæsthetics were often entrusted to young and inexperienced administrators. In the other institution, however, in which accidents were far less frequent, anæsthesia was almost invariably conducted either by visiting or by resident anæsthetists. In order, however, that I may more completely dispose of the methylated chloroform bogey, let me add that this particular brand of chloroform is that which I have for some years past recommended for employment in hospitals with which I have been connected, and that at those hospitals at which it has been employed at my recommendation no cases have arisen in which this particular brand seemed in any way responsible for difficulties or accidents. Furthermore, with the object of being consistent and of making myself perfectly certain as to the safety and efficiency of Duncan and Flockhart red label methylated chloroform, I may say that I have myself used this chloroform for the last four years and without any of those results which Mr. Nelson Hardy and the believers in the danger of this brand regard as likely to arise.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

June 20th, 1911.

FREDERIC HEWITT.

### INQUEST FOLLOWING A CASE OF "HEALING" BY CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Will you permit me to point out a mistake which has crept into your report of the inquest on Miss Nora Bohm, who died under Christian Science treatment? It is stated that the lady was living in a Christian Science "nursing home." As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as a Christian Science nursing home, and the house in which the patient was living was simply an ordinary house to which anyone could have gone. May I also say that the practitioner called in a doctor after the patient's death, as that is usual in the circumstances? No Christian Science practitioner imagines that a doctor could, or should, give a certificate when he is called in in this way.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

FREDERICK DIXON.

Surrey-street, Strand, W.C., June 24th, 1911.

### THE ELECTION OF DR. J. A. MACDONALD AS A DIRECT REPRESENTATIVE.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—I wish to thank the medical practitioners of England and Wales for choosing me to be their Direct Representative on the General Medical Council at the recent election rendered necessary by the regretted death of Dr. McManus. Immediately after the result of the election was declared I was called upon to attend the session of the Council at which the National Insurance Bill was discussed, and the report upon certain of its medical aspects prepared, which drew from the Chancellor of the Exchequer the reply published in THE LANCET last week. The consideration of the Bill by the British Medical Association in the Representative

meeting and the Special Committee has made such great inroads on time and energy that my friends will, I am sure, forgive the delay in returning my thanks; though tardily expressed, my gratitude is none the less sincere.

It shall always be my endeavour to justify the confidence my brother practitioners have shown by electing me to so responsible a position at this critical time.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Taunton, June 26th, 1911.

J. A. MACDONALD.

### THE ADVERTISING OF PATENT MEDICINES.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—It may seem ungracious if, in thanking you for your kind notice of the motion I made in the recent General Assembly of the Church of Scotland regarding secret remedy advertisements in the monthly magazine of the Church, I venture to encroach upon your space. Will you allow me to correct a wrong impression which your paragraph in last week's issue is likely to leave upon your readers regarding the decision of the Supreme Court of our Church on the matter in question? The Assembly was practically unanimous in adopting a modification of my motion. The committee in charge of the magazine had referred in their report to objections urged against certain forms of advertisement, and had reported a marked loss of income due to their refusal to insert questionable notices. Desirous of making an end of a particular class of these advertisements, which still appear in the pages of the magazine, I moved as follows:—

The General Assembly thank the Committee ..... for their care in regard to the selection of advertisements to be circulated in the magazine, and instruct them to carry their endeavours to that end yet further by excluding all advertisements of secret or patent remedies of a medical or quasi-medical description, in order that the disinterestedness and Christian character of the accredited organ of the Church may be above suspicion in that respect.

Although I am sorry to say that some voices were raised in defence of the *status quo* on financial grounds, by an overwhelming majority my motion, down to the words "*yet further*" was carried, the Assembly preferring to make its instruction more general than my proposal seemed to suggest, so as to include within its scope *other objectionable advertisements also*—e.g., of all sorts of *bogus bargains*.

Permit me to add that I value very highly your words of encouragement. I know you would not willingly do injustice either to the Church I represent or to the committee in charge of its magazine.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

June 23rd, 1911.

WILLIAM A. CURTIS.

**CHILDREN'S CONVALESCENT HOME, WESTON-SUPER-MARE.**—The annual meeting of the subscribers of this institution, which is in connexion with the Royal Hospital for Children, Bristol, was recently held. The medical report stated that during 1910 the children admitted numbered 386. 359 patients had been discharged during the year, and of these 254 had "recovered," 79 had "much improved," 23 had "improved," and 3 showed no signs of improvement. The financial statement showed that subscriptions and donations had slightly diminished.

**THE "CONGRESSO NAZIONALE D'IGIENE" AT TURIN.**—This, the first of a series of Congresses to be held in future years at one or other of the great academic or industrial cities of Italy, will be inaugurated on Oct. 5th and will sit till the 8th of that month. The agenda paper is both interesting and opportune, prominent among the subjects to be dealt with being "Malaria," by Professor Negri of Pavia; "Industrial Hygiene," by Professor Bianchini of Bologna; "Disinfectants," by Professor Frassi of Parma; "The Hygiene of Schools," by Professor Bordoni-Uffreduzzi of Milan; "Mediterranean Fever," by Professor Neri; and articles of diet, such as "Sugar," by Professor Giacosa of Turin; "Milk," by Professor Volpino and Professor De Matteis of the same school; and "Drinking Water," by Professor Abba, Professor Volpino, and Professor Cler, also of Turin. Further information as to the Congress may be had on application to the President, Dr. Luigi Pagliani, professor of hygiene in the local university.