

I have had the privilege of experimenting with this apparatus under the direction of Professor Bergonié himself in a hospital at the front, and the results have far surpassed our expectations. I feel it my duty to make it known as a matter of urgent importance. I know how much sudden enthusiasms should be suspected in the case of a new method. But at this time when inventions for demolishing humanity seem to be attaining perfection every day, one can claim some credit for an invention which promises, though it be novel, to alleviate suffering.

I hold myself at the disposal of my colleagues for all additional explanations.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

GUSTAVE MONOD,
Médecin Major, M.D. Paris, M.R.C.P. Lond., &c.
Ambulance 10, Corps d'Armée 6, Secteur 154.

THE MEDICAL DEFENCE UNION AND THE NATIONAL INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In order to test the validity and legality of the regulations of the National Insurance Commissioners in the matter of surcharging panel practitioners for alleged extravagance in prescribing for insured persons, the Medical Defence Union has, on behalf of two of its members concerned, caused to be issued writs in the High Court. I need hardly point out to your readers in general, and to those on the panel in particular, the importance of these actions, which I trust will be before His Majesty's judges within a comparatively short time. The Medical Defence Union has already been successful in every action or appeal brought in respect of legal questions under the Act, and is engaged daily in working, *inter alia*, for the protection of those who have joined the panel willingly or unwillingly.

Those who have not joined the Medical Defence Union should do so without delay, as this year will be critical in the history of panel practitioners, and they cannot afford to be without its protection.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

A. G. BATEMAN,
General Secretary.
4, Trafalgar-square, W.C., May 15th, 1915.

PRELIMINARY EXPLORATION OF THE PELVIS IN CERTAIN CASES OF ACUTE APPENDICITIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Professor W. Sampson Handley, in his interesting lecture on Ileus Duplex in your issue of May 1st, advocates exploration of the pelvis, through a preliminary median sub-umbilical incision, in cases where there is doubt as to whether the infection has spread from the right iliac fossa to the pelvis. On the principle that in dealing with a possible extension of the infection beyond the iliac fossa it is always better to know than to guess, the writer has for some years employed a procedure similar, except in the detail that a 2-inch incision is made over the lower portion of the left rectus muscle, the fibres of which are split, with the object of preventing post-operative hernia.

A recent case was that of a young man who when first seen had advanced appendicitis and was ashen grey from toxæmia. Preliminary exploration through the left lower rectus showed gross infection of the lower abdomen. Large drainage tubes through the left rectus, the right iliac fossa and loin, combined with the Fowler position and many pints of saline solution given per rectum by

Murphy's method, resulted in interrupted recovery with total absence of incisional herniæ. Preliminary exploration through the left lower rectus takes but a few minutes, changes doubt into certainty, and appears to have no serious drawbacks.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
Plymouth, May 4th, 1915. C. HAMILTON WHITEFORD.

THE TREATMENT OF CORNS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the letter of Mr. Paul Bernard Roth in your issue of May 15th. Some years ago I was an absolute martyr to corns, one particular corn giving me most excruciating annoyance when I walked. I conceived the idea of wearing two pairs of socks, a thin pair (merino) next the skin and a thick woollen pair over these, and I took particular care to have boots with thick soles "made to the foot" and would not have my "foot made to the boot." In a very short time my corns disappeared and I have not been troubled since, but my friends laugh at my boots. I now find walking a pleasure.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

May 14th, 1915.

D.P.H.

Obituary.

BERTRAM HERBERT LYNE STIVENS,
M.R.C.S., M.D. BRUX.

Dr. Bertram Herbert Lyne Stivens passed away at his residence, 107, Park-street, Grosvenor-square, London, on Sunday afternoon, May 9th. He was in his usual health up to Friday, April 30th, when a feverish attack with sore-throat supervened. On Monday, May 3rd, feeling somewhat better, he attended to his professional duties, as also on the following day. On Tuesday evening, May 4th, the inflammation of the throat returned and became rapidly worse, and on Sunday afternoon he died from streptococcal pharyngitis with œdematous laryngitis and pyæmic infection. This is always rapid and often fatal, particularly in a constitution which is not strong. In spite of his manly figure and fine presence Dr. Stivens had visibly failed, we are informed by a personal friend of his, since the death of a beloved daughter two years ago.

Dr. Stivens was born at Birkdale in 1855. He spent his early life in Cheshire and was educated at Bunbury Grammar School. Later he studied abroad at Stuttgart and Heidelberg University. He then decided upon a medical career and entered the medical school of King's College Hospital in 1877, being some four or five years older than most of the men of his year. He had a very successful career as a student, and proceeded to the tenure of two residential posts at that time much coveted. He was first house accoucheur under the late Dr. W. S. Playfair, and later house surgeon to the great Lister himself at the time when the operating theatre used to be crowded with visitors to learn the new antiseptic methods. These two posts under such masters were sufficient to lay the foundation of a talent for accurate and conscientious observation to which he owed his success in practice.

Although Dr. Stivens might well have aspired to consulting work, the opportunity of joining an old-established practice in the West-end decided him to go direct from the wards to family practice in Kensington Gardens-square. Here his success, at