- 1 Lange DJ, Trojaborg W, Latov N, et al. Multifocal motor neuropathy with conduction block: Is it a distinct clinical entity? *Neurology* 1992;42:497-505.
- 2 Krarup C, Steward JB, Sumner AJ, Pestronk A, Lipton SA. A syndrome of asymmetric limb weakness with motor conduction block. *Neurology* 1990;40:118-27.
- 3 Pestronk A, Cornblath DR, Ilyas AA, et al. A treatable multifocal motor neuropathy with antibodies to GM1 ganglioside. *Ann Neurol* 1988;24:73-8.
- 4 Chaudhry V, Corse AM, Cornblath DR, et al. Multifocal motor neuropathy: response to human immune globulin. *Ann Neurol* 1993;33:237-42.
- 5 Nobile-Orazio E, Meucci N, Barbieri S, Carpo M, Scarlato G. High-dose intravenous immunoglobulin therapy in multifocal motor neuropathy. *Neurology* 1993;43:537-44.
- 6 Azulay JP, Blin O, Pouget J, et al. Intravenous immunoglobulin treatment in patients with motor neuron syndromes associated with anti-GM1 antibodies: a double blind, placebo-controlled study. *Neurology* 1994;44:429-32.
- 7 Rowland LP. Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis: theories and therapies. *Ann Neurol* 1994;35:129-30.
- 8 Report from an ad hoc subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology AIDS Task Force. Research criteria for diagnosis of chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP). *Neurology* 1991;41:617-8.
- 9 Rhee EK, England JD, Sumner AJ. A computer simulation of conduction block: effects produced by actual block versus interphase cancellation. *Ann Neurol* 1990;28:146-56.
- 10 Van den Berg LH, Marrink J, De Jager AEJ, et al. Anti-GM1 antibodies in patients with Guillain-Barré syndrome. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1992;55:8-11.
- 11 Van der Ploeg RJO, Fidler V, Oosterhuis HJGH. Hand-held myometry: reference values. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1991;54:244-7.
- 12 Van Swieten JC, Koudstaal PK, Visser MC, Schouten HJA, Van Gijn J. Interobserver agreement for the assessment of handicap in stroke patients. *Stroke* 1988;19:604-7.
- 13 McLeod RS, Cohen Z, Taylor DW, Cullen JB. Single-patient randomised clinical trials. *Lancet* 1986;29:726-8.
- 14 Van Doorn PA, Vermeulen M, Brand A, Mulder PGH, Busch HFM. Intravenous immunoglobulin treatment in patients with chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy. *Arch Neurol* 1991;48:217-20.
- 15 Willison HJ. Antiglycolipid antibodies in peripheral neuropathy: fact or fiction? *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1994;57:1303-7.

NEUROLOGY IN LITERATURE

Medical manners

Although Mr Lydgate and other physicians mentioned here have established the art of patient communication and, perhaps manipulation, the Yorkshire doctor in Howarth has clearly abandoned any such effort—one suspects that he had never acquired it.

In case one thought that overspecialisation was a modern failing, Dostoyevsky quickly disabuses us. In the same extract he describes the disarming directness of a medical student!

Henry Fielding, 1749, Tom Jones

To say the truth, every physician, almost, hath his favourite disease, to which he ascribes all the victories obtained over human nature. The gout, the rheumatism, the stone, the gravel, and the consumption, have all their several patrons in the faculty; and none more than the nervous fever, or the fever on the spirits.

Gustave Flaubert, 1865-7, Madam Bovary

When Dr Larivière was angry, the whole hospital quaked. His pupils revered him to the point of trying to imitate him in everything as soon as they set up in practice themselves;

Elizabeth Gaskell, 1857, The life of Charlotte Brontë
When my husband had checked the effusion of blood with a strap that one of the bystanders unbuckled from his leg, he asked if a surgeon had been sent for.

"Yoi," was the answer; "But we dunna think he'll come."

"Why not?"

"He's owd, yo seen, and asthmatic, and it's up-hill."

My husband, taking a boy for his guide, drove as fast as he could to the surgeon's house, which was about three-quarters of a mile off, and met the aunt of the wounded lad leaving it.

"Is he coming?" inquired my husband.

"Well, he didna' say he wouldna' come."

"But tell him the lad may bleed to death."

"I did."

"And what did he say?"

"Why, only 'D -- n him; what do I care?'"

George Eliot, 1858, Scenes of clerical life

They had both been long established in Milby, and as each had a sufficient practice, there was no very malignant rivalry between them; on the contrary, they had that sort of friendly contempt for each other which is always conducive to a good understanding between professional men; and when any new surgeon attempted in an ill-advised hour, to settle himself in the town, it was strikingly demonstrated how slight and trivial are theoretical differences compared with the broad basis of common human feeling.

Charles Dickens, 1859, A Tale of Two Cities

Doctors who made great fortunes out of dainty remedies for imaginary disorders that never existed smiled upon their courtly patients in the ante-chambers of monseigneur.

George Eliot, 1871, Middlemarch

Mr Lydgate had the medical accomplishment of looking perfectly grave whatever nonsense was talked to him and his dark steady eyes gave him impressiveness as a listener.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 1880, The brothers Karamazov

I happened to come across a very enthusiastic little medical student. "You may die," he told me, "but at least you'll have a very good idea of what illness you're dying of!" And, then again, the way they have of sending you to specialists. "We can only diagnose your disease," they tell you. "You'd better go to such and such a specialist and he'll be sure to cure you." I tell you the old-fashioned doctor who used to cure you of all illnesses has quite disappeared. Now there are only specialists and they all advertise in the papers. If there's something wrong with your nose, they will send you to Paris: There's a European specialist there who cures noses. You go to Paris, he examines your nose. "I'm sorry," he tells you, "I can only cure your right nostril, for I don't cure left nostrils, it's not my speciality. You'd better go to Vienna. There you'll find a special specialist who will cure your left nostril."

G D PERKIN

Regional Neurosciences Centre,
Charing Cross Hospital,
Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8RF, UK