myself that the qualities of this excellent beverage depended mainly upon the care used in the selection of the best kinds of malt and hops, and upon the ingenuity exhibited in conducting the processes of mashing and fermenting. Our continental brewers have much to learn in these points to come up to the English brewers. I have no hesitation in saying that England possesses the greatest adepts in malting. I know positively that the chief brewers of Munich, who undoubtedly produce the best beer in Germany, have gone through an apprenticeship in Burton. This may account for the predilection entertained by the general public, as well as by medical men, for these varieties of beer; for the instinct of humanity and experience appear to be as good guides in the choice of things that contribute to health and enjoyment as the profoundest philosophy.

Professors Graham and Hofmann, in the excellent Report already addressed to you upon the alleged Adulteration of the Pale Ale by Strychnine, have indicated a very simple process for detecting the most minute quantity of strychnine contained in beer. I have satisfied myself of the great convenience and accuracy of their method, and have farther assured myself, by an analysis of several specimens of pale ale obtained from London houses, supplied by your establishment, of the utter groundlessness of the imputation, that this beer was poisoned with strychnine. I am positive, and am supported in my views by the concordant analyses of all chemists who have occupied themselves with the examination of beer, that the poisoning of pale ale with strychnine has never occurred. I believe I may safely add, that it never will take place; for although an ignorant brewer might be induced, from interested motives, to add *nux vomica* to his beer, the word strychnine so forcibly suggests one of the most virulent poisons, that whoever has heard anything about strychnine at all, is sure to be aware of this. By adulterating his beer with strychnine, the brewer would be knowingly committing a crime which, in the present state of science, must be followed by immediate detection and punishment.

Mr. E. Merek, of Darmstadt, one of the most extensive strychnine manufacturers in Europe, informs me that this substance is peculiarly adapted to destroy vermin of all kinds. In many parts of Germany it is the popular poison for rats and mice. This fact fully accounts for the large amount of the drug that has lately been introduced into commerce.

The specimens of your pale ale sent to me have afforded me another opportunity of confirming its valuable qualities. I am myself an admirer of this beverage, and my own experience enables me to recommend it, in accordance with the opinion of the most eminent English physicians, as a very agreeable and efficient tonic, and as a general beverage both for the invalid and the robust.

Giessen, May 6th, 1852.

JUSTUS LIEBIG.

* * This letter was written by BARON LIEBIG, as will be seen by the date, before the Report of the ANALYTICAL SANITARY COMMISSION was published; but it is confirmatory in all respects of the views taken in that able and elaborate document.—ED. L.

Correspondence.

“Audi alteram partem.”

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I was not a little surprised, on perusing THE LANCET of May 22nd, to find a letter signed by a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, relative to the fellowship of that College, and from which it appears that no person can be eligible to be a fellow, unless *three* years of his acquirement of professional knowledge be passed at one of the Metropolitan hospitals or schools.

Not being aware of the existence of so odious, and, to say the least, unjust regulation of the College of Surgeons, I am indeed glad to find that your correspondent has drawn the attention of the profession to the subject, by inserting his letter in your valuable columns.

Sir, I am a provincial student, and, like your correspondent, had entertained the hope that some time or other I might have reached that standard in my profession which would have enabled me to enrol myself as a fellow—which, however, under present circumstances I am disqualified from doing, as it is *not* my intention to listen to the superfine instruction and lectures of the London professors.

What reason, may I ask, can there be for such a by-law?

I cannot conceive any, unless it be that the council have arrived at the conclusion that the provincial schools do not possess that intellectual talent which is necessary for the attainment of the fellowship of those they have to do with. I say if *this* be their opinion, allow me, with all due deference, to assert that they are labouring under a slight mistake; for I can tell them, and that with no small degree of pride, that the school to which I have the honour to belong, possesses as clever a staff of lecturers as most in the metropolis; at all events quite capable of training any student for the fellowship.

On this ground alone, could no other be found, I maintain that such a regulation ought at once and for ever to be erased from the rules of the College; in fact, I am only amazed that it ever should have existed.

Let the council, then, show their due appreciation of the provincial portion of the profession by cancelling the law—sooner or later it must be done. It will not in this age of enlightenment be submitted to; let them, therefore, yield while they can have the credit of a graceful concession, and let it not be supposed that they are obliged to grant whatever they ultimately give.

I remain, Sir, yours, obediently,
A LEEDS STUDENT.

Leeds, May, 1852.

THE COMING GENERAL ELECTION AND THE CLAIMS OF NAVAL ASSISTANT-SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In consequence of your able and consistent advocacy of the cause of the assistant-surgeons in her Majesty's navy, I resolved to avail myself of the opportunity afforded by the contest now going on for the representation of this borough in Parliament, to ascertain the opinion of the Hon. Captain Denman, R.N., upon that subject. On Friday last, I attended at a meeting of the electors of the St. Clement's Ward, and asked the Honourable Captain, if returned to Parliament, would he, by every means in his power, aid in giving to the assistant-surgeons in the navy a private cabin and ward-room rank? He replied that he should do all in his power to facilitate the carrying out of, and aid in procuring, any orders to that effect.

I trust that the medical men of every constituency in the kingdom will institute similar inquiries of every candidate; and such a demonstration of feeling cannot but have a beneficial effect in the furtherance of the undeniable claims of the assistant-surgeons in the navy, and at the same time aid in increasing the efficiency of the service.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours very obediently,

Lever-street, Manchester, May 31, 1852.

PETER ROYLE.

* * We think it right to publish this letter, but must state, at the same time, that Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. Bright, the present members for Manchester, are the friends of the cause of the assistant-surgeons of the Navy, and of every other liberal cause. Our own personal observation enables us to state that Manchester at this time is admirably represented in the House of Commons, and that a change in it would be discreditable, rather than otherwise, to the character of the constituency of that important city.—ED. L.

THE MILITIA BILL AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a member of the medical profession I beg to tender my thanks to Mr. Wakley for the energetic, although unsuccessful, opposition which he made against the non-exemption of medical men for the militia.

The compelling medical men to serve or pay for the militia appears to me to be a most iniquitous proceeding on the part of the Derby administration, and as such I protest against it, and trust that every member of our profession having votes at the next general election will take care to refuse all aid to the present high-church-and-state government, exercising their votes and interest for procuring more liberal and enlightened rulers.

I should like to know why peers and parsons are to be exempted, whilst the doctor, who is liable to be called upon by the sick at every hour of the night and day, is not exempted.

I beg to propose, as a resolution, that the present Government and Parliament, holding such a contemptuous opinion of