SALE OF VACCINE LYMPH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As you have never noticed the circumstance in your valuable journal, I presume you are ignorant that there exists in this metropolis *a shop for the sale of vaccine lymph.*

A case of small-pox after vaccination having occurred in this neighbourhood about the latter end of last month, I was requested to vaccinate an infant, and to revaccinate some other parties. I sent to the *London Vaccine Institution*, in Providence-row, Finsbury, for a supply of lymph, for which, not being a subscriber, I was charged the sum of *two shillings and sixpence.*

Now, Mr. Editor, let me call your attention to the injuries inflicted on the neighbouring medical men by such an institution. It professes to vaccinate gratuitously all who apply, whether objects of charity or not; and, therefore, not only deprives the practitioner of a source of emolument from his rich patients, but, by taking out of his hands the gratuitous vaccination of the poor, prevents him from keeping up a supply of lymph for the services of those who feel too much honest pride to apply to a public charity.

It is said, that these shopkeepers have applied to the Government for the privilege of receiving its "orders," and sending out their goods through the medium of the Post-office, free of expense, so as to have the benefit of a country trade in addition to their town trade. Would not the same privilege be desirable for other shopkeepers? I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE JACKSON.

Church-street, Spitalfields,

Jan. 21, 1834.

NOTES BY GRACCHUS.

No. 3.—GRACCHUS TO HIS BRETHREN.

A TIME is fast approaching when, it is to be hoped, many medical men will be called before a Parliamentary Committee to state their opinions on the subject of medical reform.

The chief questions will be those which relate to the existence of evils or grievances in the profession. Others will be asked respecting the nature of the proposed remedies. It would be highly desirable that unanimity of sentiment should prevail on this topic, but that is not to be

expected. The whole body of corporators and their followers or expectants will declare that the present system works well, that the existing institutions are all but perfection. In those ranks there will be great, if not complete, unanimity of sentiment; because one general and powerful cause will operate throughout them,—that of *self-interest*. The reformers, on the other hand, will be divided. Some will be influenced by selfish feelings,—many by crude or ill-concocted notions. It is best that the evil should be foreseen, and, if possible, guarded against.

There are some general heads with respect both to grievances and remedies, on which, it is to be hoped, reformers will agree. The abuses in our corporations have so often been pointed out in this journal, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon them. The incongruities in medical education should be carefully borne in mind, and those who are examined should point out the pernicious consequences which result from the multitudinous forms and *curricula* prescribed by the various colleges and seminaries of education existing in these islands. The medical degrees obtained in Oxford, Cambridge, Aberdeen, and St. Andrew's, where no efficient schools of medicine exist, will be a good set-off against the sticklers for upholding *all* existing institutions, and the declaimers against one Faculty for superintending medical instruction and practice. The degradation imposed on the whole profession by the concentration of all legal power over the greater number of medical practitioners, in a company of drug-merchants, should be urged on the notice of the committee, as a strong argument for the creation of a new and paramount power over a liberal and learned profession. The petty privileges and immunities conferred by separate and insulated corporations, to the exclusion of regularly-educated men who do not happen to be of their body, are crying evils, which a committee have only to comprehend in order to condemn. The system of professional remuneration, by charges on medicine instead of medical attendance, should be urged on the notice of the committee, as one fraught with evil consequences, both to the public and the profession. It is vain to say that general practitioners are already entitled to make charges for attendance on medical cases. A decision in a court of law forms no basis to act on, and the rule should be settled by an Act of Parliament. Another point to be urged, is the elevation of the whole scale of medical education, together with a searching public examination, after which the diploma or degree conferred, should empower the individual to practise