for "Verax" to grumble about. In trying to place as roseate a complexion as possible on his present tenure of office your correspondent only tells half the story. I have had experience of several of these associations, having acted as locum tenens and assistant before accepting my present appointment as resident medical officer, which latter, I may say, I undertook "from sheer stress of circumstances." I am, therefore, in a position to supply some particulars which "Verax" has carefully ignored or left in the background. I may say I possess the acquaintance of many occupying a similar position to myself, and I have never yet met one who holds, or ever held, such an appointment that has not complained bitterly of the treatment received. The rules, management &c. of all these associations are based on similar lines. All the members of the association are generally supplied with a copy of the rules. There is one which is being continually brought under the members' observation—viz., "Complaints against the medical officer &c." From the copy which I enclose you can see it is somewhat similar to those generally placarded in omnibuses, so that to all intents and purposes, in the estimation of the management committee, a surgeon in this respect is placed on no higher a level than an omnibus conductor. It is no uncommon thing for me to be told—"You are our servant." "We keep you." "I will report you," &c. Does "Verax" consider that any medical man occupying a position of this character is upholding the dignity of the profession? It sometimes happens that members for very trivial causes lodge complaints with the managing committee, who, by the way, are empowered if they think proper to suspend you without a moment's notice. You are then duly summoned to appear before this august tribunal to meet the complainant. The latter is permitted to cross-examine the medical officer after making his statement, and in so doing the latter has to submit to the humiliating ordeal of being asked either by the complainant himself or his friends or the managing committee perhaps many insulting questions. Nothing, I assure you, Sirs, in my experience affords greater pleasure to some of these ignorant men than "sitting" on their intellectual superior. In one case I was reprimanded for being insolent to a member, the insolence consisting of a mild suggestion "that the said member might wash himself before coming to the surgery to see me directly from an offensive smelling occupation he was following." I trust "Verax" is more fortunate and experiences none of these unpleasant incidents.

I contend that it is quite unprofessional, as well as illegal, for any medical man to barter away portion of his midwifery or vaccination fees to the association. If the managing or general committees pay themselves for attending quite (to my mind) unnecessary meetings out of fees so earned, I see very little practical difference between this and covering. The more fees the committees obtain the more frequently they go "up and down the town" extolling the excellent qualities of the association and their doctor—all for the purpose of "bringing more grist to the mill." From the vast numbers I have to see between visiting and at the surgery—sometimes as many as one hundred and fifty daily—I find that I am inevitably drifting into very careless habits in examination and diagnosis. I am painfully cognisant of the fact that one day, only a very short time ago, having a great number of people to visit, I overlooked a case of intussusception not having time to make a sufficiently careful examination. Here is a life that might have been saved had I been otherwise circumstanced. This is not I regret to say a solitary incident. There are many other points in connexion with our appointments which from the length this letter has already reached I am unable to touch upon.

I trust, in conclusion, "Verax" will have the good sense to abandon his present untenable position, and throw in his lot with his brethren in endeavouring to ameliorate their position and terminate a system which, as far as my experience enables me to judge, I have no hesitation in characterising as an injury to the profession, a fraud on the public, besides being disgraceful in a professional sense to every medical man who countenances it by lending his support.

I remain, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Oct. 26th, 1892.

A MEDICAL AID OFFICER.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Certainly something should be done to rectify these growing evils, and I appeal to the General Medical Council for their support. In your article on Dr. Leslie Phillips's

report you suggest that the remedy should come from individual members; but I maintain that it is useless looking for hope from that quarter, for though I hold one of these appointments I know perfectly well that if I resigned forty candidates are ready to take my place. A vigorous and determined stand should now be made, and, if aided by the Council, there should be no difficulty. Unless they are altered there will soon be no private practitioners, but plenty of "businesses" with patients as "customers."

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Oct. 19th, 1892.

L.R.C.P. LOND.

INTERNATIONAL MONUMENT TO SEMMELWEIS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—When I was preparing the Goulstonian Lectures on Puerperal Fever (1872), I was of course obliged to study deeply and widely its history. There was no point which interested me more than the claims put forward in favour of Semmelweis, and I think that I showed clearly to what extent such claims were justified. I found that these claims were advanced by those who were evidently not acquainted with the history of this subject and what had been done in this country long before the time of Semmelweis. I am not one of those who would discourage the expression of admiration for those who have worked unselfishly in the interests of science and humanity, but we must not sacrifice justice to generosity, otherwise more harm than good is done.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Savile-row, W., Oct. 24th, 1892.

ROBERT LEE.

"COMPULSORY VACCINATION."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In reference to your paragraph about me I may say that I am not aware that I have made up my mind on the subject which I am investigating more than other members of the Commission. I held my present opinions long before I joined it and was appointed in succession to the late Mr. Bradlaugh because I was understood to hold similar views. I appeared before the Rochdale guardians as any other parent may do—my being a member of the Vaccination Commission was only a coincidence. I asserted that there are no known means of securing the purity of lymph or of limiting with certainty its inflammatory effects, and that serious results have occurred from vaccination. I also asserted that where isolation has been adopted it has been found effectual without vaccination, and when vaccination has been tried without isolation it has been found very ineffectual. Will any doctor deny these assertions? Small-pox is so rare that I think that the risk my unvaccinated children run of catching it is less than the risk of the injury which might come to them from vaccination, even supposing the protective powers of the operation to be as great as some think it is. I do not enter into the question as to how much the diminution of the disease is owing to vaccination and how much to better medical knowledge and improved sanitation—I speak of the present risk. I should not object to a Compulsory Isolation Bill.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Reform Club, Oct. 21st, 1892.

JOHN A. BRIGHT.

* * If it were possible to have a perfect system of isolation in every part of the land there might be no need for other preventive measures; but certainly we cannot agree that up to the present time, where "isolation has been adopted, it has been found effectual without vaccination." As regards the comparative risks referred to by Mr. Bright, we would venture to suggest that it is not a mere question of "catching" small-pox, but of having it in a severe and dangerous form.—ED. L.

DEATH UNDER CHLOROFORM.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have to report a case of death under chloroform which occurred at Stockport Infirmary on Friday, Oct. 21st. The patient was admitted into the infirmary suffering from carcinoma of the rectum. He was an old man (aged sixty-three) and much emaciated, and though the heart was rather weak, still there was no valvular disease. Both the patient and his

friends were very anxious that an operation should be performed. Lumbar colotomy was proposed. The chloroform used in this case was Duncan and Flockhart's. Patient had been inhaling the chloroform for ten minutes, when his breathing suddenly became very shallow and pulse hardly perceptible. The administration of the anæsthetic was at once stopped and artificial respiration commenced, ether injected hypodermically, the head was lowered, legs lifted up and nitrite of amyl in capsules held before the nose. All, however, proved of no avail, though artificial respiration was kept up for half an hour. We have had very few deaths under anæsthetics in this infirmary. In a case previous to the above mentioned, which happened two years ago, the anæsthetic employed was ether and the operation was also for carcinoma of rectum. In neither case had the operation been commenced.—I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

H. R. BELLAMY, L.R.C.S. & L.R.C.P. Edin.
Senior House Surgeon to the Infirmary.

Stockport, Oct. 25th, 1892.

N.B.—The amount of chloroform used was only one drachm and a half.

EXPERIMENTS ON ANIMALS.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—General practitioners will agree with Dr. Tyson in his appeal for facts in support of vivisection. What we need is something definite to put before our patients to justify the position taken by the medical profession on the subject. The public is in search of the truth, and when we know that amongst the public are such men as Lord Coleridge and the late Serjeant Ballantine trained in the analysis of evidence, it is the worst possible policy on our part to treat them as a pack of hysterical women. We must remember they have the whole literature of the subject before them, and that it is useless to say the painful experiments are few and the pain trifling. When the public see the rivalry between distinguished professors and the undisguised pleasure it gives one to show how that all the experiments conducted by a brother experimenter are futile, they look upon the talk about a deep love for humanity on the part of the scientist as cant. The scientist is human, like the rest of us; research is his work, and the discovery of a new law is more to him than the possible applicability of the law and the needs of the human race. The science of the physiology of the animal kingdom must, like that of astronomy or any other branch of knowledge, stand upon its own merits; and it is to be regretted that it has ever been thought necessary to call in the immediate applicability of its results and the practice of medicine to justify its pursuit. Let us be candid with the public, and we shall be on more secure ground. We cannot expect men like Browning, Manning, Ruskin and their successors to be put off with anything short of the truth.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Fulham, Oct. 25th, 1892. WM. F. CLARKE, M.D. Lond., B.S.

MANCHESTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Small-pox.

THE recently published returns show that small-pox cases still continue to crop up in and around Manchester, the principal foci of the disease being Warrington and certain of the smaller Yorkshire towns which are uncomfortably near Manchester. At their last meeting the clerk to the Chorlton guardians reported the occurrence of two cases of small-pox in that union, a circumstance which naturally produced considerable uneasiness at the board, for the union seems to have been exceptionally free from this disease for a lengthened period. The guardians, however, had previously taken steps to encourage vaccination and revaccination in their district, and as the cases reported were promptly removed to the small-pox hospital it is hoped that the further spread of the disease will be prevented. If we may judge from the printed reports to be submitted to the Council at their meeting to-day, there seems to be an unfortunate hitch in completing the hospital accommodation for small-pox at Monsall. It appears that the two temporary sheds which were erected some few weeks since for the segregation of any cases of cholera that might possibly find their way hither from the Continent are

to be utilised for the treatment of small-pox. The medical officer of health, however, will not sanction the use of these sheds for that purpose until they are surrounded by a high wall and provided with separate administrative buildings, so as to render the small-pox hospital absolutely independent of the fever wards and to secure its complete isolation from them.

The Chair of Surgery.

It is rumoured that Professor Hare is about to resign the chair of Surgery at Owens College, unhappily on the ground of ill-health. Mr. Hare has only held the professorship for about three years, but during that period he has devoted himself assiduously to the teaching of surgery, and he certainly has won the esteem and goodwill of the great body of the students who have been members of his class. His departure from Manchester will be much regretted by a wide and increasing circle of friends, both medical and lay, amongst whom his courteous bearing and unassuming conduct have made him a general favourite.

The Manchester Crematorium.

On Friday last a special meeting of the advocates and supporters of cremation was held in the grounds of the Manchester Crematorium, the Duke of Westminster being present as chairman. The attendance was considerable, and there is no doubt that public opinion in these parts is being gradually influenced in favour of cremation as a means of disposing of the dead. The speeches delivered at the meeting of last week were in good taste, and will probably do much to dissipate the not unnatural prejudice against cremation which still lingers in the minds of many of our most thoughtful and public-spirited citizens.

The Municipal Elections.

As the 9th of November draws nearer the usual preparations become apparent for the coming contest for vacant seats in our local parliament. Ours is the largest municipal council in the kingdom outside the metropolis, and consists, since the enlargement of the city by the Act of last year, of 104 members. As is usual at election times, there is a general protestation amongst the combatants that imperial politics are to have no weight in the selection of candidates for the several vacancies; and, equally as a matter of course, every candidate whose address has hitherto been published is well known to be the nominee of one political party or another. The so-called "labour candidates" who were sent into the Council some time since with a considerable flourish of trumpets do not seem to have turned out an unqualified success, and there are indications in some of the addresses recently issued that some other expedient is about to be tried for securing the due representation of the working classes on our municipal Council. Since the recent enlargement of the Council a considerably larger proportion of medical representatives has been returned than at any previous period on record. The Council now contains five members of the medical profession; and, as these gentlemen are in every case members of the sanitary committee, it is to be hoped that their influence on the operations of that committee will be in all respects salutary. A complete list of candidates for this year's vacancies has not as yet been published; but in a city where so very much still remains to be achieved before its sanitary condition can be regarded with anything approaching complacency it is much to be desired that the number of medical members of the city Council should be still further augmented. It must be kept constantly and prominently before our representatives in the Council that the death-rate of Manchester is still exceedingly high; and I hope that, whatever may be the result of the forthcoming elections as regards the balance of political parties in the Council, every member of that body will remember that the public is getting impatient at the continuation from year to year of the present needless sacrifice of human life.

Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society.

The inaugural meeting of the ensuing winter session was held on Friday, Oct. 21st, at 8.15 P.M., Mr. R. C. Chicken, F.R.C.S., President, in the chair. Dr. P. H. Pye-Smith, F.R.S., of Guy's Hospital, delivered an address on the Prognosis of Certain Diseases. The influences of age and sex on prognosis were considered in connexion with a large number of diseases. Chronic constitutional states often had an unfavourable influence on acute disease, this being marked in the case of chronic Bright's disease and diabetes. The importance of the gouty diathesis was, however, apt to be overrated. In conclusion the lecturer carefully examined