gested when returned. The contents of the stomach never appeared, neither bile, in what was rejected. On gently introducing a No. 12 bougie, it met with little obstruction, but caused great pain on nearly reaching the stomach. On reviewing the various conditions which might cause such symptoms, (the long duration of the malady, and the absence, as he thought, of the cancerous cachexia, precluding the idea that it could be of a malignant nature,) he (Mr. Martyn) concluded that the case was one of stricture of the œsophagus, attended with ulceration of the mucous lining at this part. The case continues under treatment.

The second case was one of primary stricture of the œsophagus, ultimately involving the larynx, and terminating fatally. Mary Anne G—, aged thirty-one, had been affected with serious difficulty of swallowing for four years. It commenced immediately after the subsidence of some enlarged glands, situated underneath the jaw; these were reduced by painting with iodine. The patient was otherwise well, excepting that she was anæmic in a marked degree. The difficulty of swallowing soon became so great, that she was obliged to confine her diet to fluids and *sops*. It was referred to a point just behind the larynx. There was also considerable pain latterly felt at this part. In October of last year she lost her voice, and had frequent and violent cough, especially after taking fluids; sometimes a little blood appeared. Her breathing rapidly grew difficult. When first seen by the author on Nov. 25th, she was suffering from the foregoing symptoms in a greatly aggravated degree. At this time she presented the appearance of an advanced stage of consumption. In a short time the breathing became rapidly obstructed, so that suffocation was imminent, and swallowing almost impossible. For some days, with great effort, she could scarcely get down teaspoonfuls. Opening the trachea became necessary, which Mr. Martyn did in the usual way on the night of November 30th. The relief to the patient was very great; she soon could swallow pints of nourishment in the day. She rapidly gained flesh and strength. In a fortnight the old difficulties of swallowing returned. It was difficult to pass the smallest catheter to feed her. Enemata of broths were used. The larynx remained obstructed perfectly. On January 8th, thirty-nine days after tracheotomy, a considerable swelling of the face and neck took place, attended with great pain, and preceded by shivering and constitutional disturbance. In three or four days the swelling subsided, and shortly afterwards a discharge of offensive pus took place into the pharynx. She sank in four days from this time. The post-mortem examination revealed a large abscess behind the pharynx and œsophagus, extending far into the posterior mediastinum; the carotid artery and jugular vein of the left side were found bathed in the pus, their sheath being destroyed at about the middle of the neck, &c. The œsophagus was thickened by a deposit of fibrous tissue, forming the stricture opposite the cricoid cartilage, narrowing the canal so as just to admit a small bougie. Extensive ulceration of both the inner surfaces of the œsophagus and larynx had taken place, almost to the entire destruction of the mucous membrane of these parts. It had perforated the larynx just at the upper margin of the cricoid cartilage beneath the internal angles of the arytenoid cartilages. The peculiarity in this case, the author observed, was, in the necessity for opening the trachea, and the great advantage that resulted from it, prolonging, as it did, the life of the patient for seven weeks, and at one time promising the possibility of ultimate recovery.

The deceased parts were shown to the Society, and Mr. LANE likewise produced a preparation from a young subject, showing stricture of the same part of the œsophagus, and ravages of the mucous membrane reaching the larynx, with, also, a perforation into it, but at the lower margin of the cricoid cartilage, remarkably similar, in most respects, to the above.

Correspondence.

"Audialteram partem."

MR. FERGUSSON.

[LETTER FROM PROFESSOR LIZARS.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The most important service which the press in a free country can render to its inhabitants, is the vigilant and impartial surveillance which it takes of the conduct of all public men—politicians, lawyers, physicians, surgeons, &c. To be

truly beneficial, its comments must be strictly true and unprejudiced, divested equally of partisanship, favouritism, and abuse. In no field of review is the press more called upon than in that of medicine, to hold up to public scorn every form of untruth and quackery; for science and humanity equally claim such a protection. But while it is its especial province to uphold and defend the cause of truth, it is not less its duty to eschew making false and injurious attacks upon character and misrepresentations as to conduct.

The editorial remarks of a weekly professional periodical have led me into these remarks. The editor, in his leading article, denouncing "professional encouragement of the homœopathic quackery," thus expresses himself:—"A broad professional principle is at stake, and we feel it to be a public duty to show the tendency of Mr. Fergusson's example to be more injurious than that of Messrs. Shaw, De Morgan, Moore, and Henry; inasmuch as these gentlemen encouraged one man, while Mr. Fergusson supports a whole sect." This is a most serious wholesale charge against a surgeon in Mr. Fergusson's high position, involving him so deeply in the "despicable compound of fraud and folly" which homœopathy is so truly characterized to be, and if unfounded, as I presume it is, the accusation cannot be too speedily and publicly refuted. The editorial rebuke has called forth a host of letters from correspondents, which have thronged "in hurried files," the columns of the journal in question. In all the letters I perceive there is reference only made to *one case* in which Mr. Fergusson is alleged to have consulted with a homœopath; and his connexion with that case he explains in his letter which is published in THE LANCET of last week. The statement which he makes is, in my mind, professionally satisfactory, and personally creditable. He says, *that he does not consult with homœopaths, has no faith in homœopathy, and gives no encouragement to homœopaths to consult him.* Further, *that he had never been in conjunction with a homœopath in attendance on a Noble Duke: he had visited in an urgent surgical case, and had not afterwards seen the patient.* I have myself been frequently called into surgical cases, in which I operated, although I knew that the patients had been under homœopathic treatment, but the homœopaths themselves I have never met, nor had ever any dealings with. Therefore I agree with Mr. Fergusson in never refusing surgical assistance when called for in any urgent or important case. I consider that I should not be justified, either by the moral law or professional etiquette to restrict my usefulness by withholding the indispensable operative assistance to a homœopathic patient whose indomitable prejudices I could not overcome so far as to compel him to dismiss his ordinary attendant, whom, nevertheless, I objected to meet, or allowed to interfere with my surgical proceedings. On such a principle Mr. Fergusson acted, and had he acted otherwise, his conduct would have amounted to a culpable and unjustifiable neglect of duty.

Mr. Fergusson having thus honourably relieved himself from the individual charge preferred against him, is called upon in self-protection and justification to demand a retraction and explanation from the party who has publicly accused him of *supporting the whole sect of homœopaths*, and by whose representation an unfair hue and cry in the profession has been raised against him.

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,
South Charlotte-street, Edinburgh,
May, 1858.

JOHN LIZARS, F.R.C.S.

THE PROFESSION AND HOMŒOPATHIC QUACKS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me to make a few comments on Mr. Fergusson's letter of the 7th inst. which appeared in THE LANCET of the 8th.

Mr. Fergusson acknowledges that he accompanied Dr. Bell into Lincolnshire, but repudiates all connexion with homœopathy. So far good; but is this the impression he left with those by whom he was summoned? The letter signed "N. E.," which appeared in the number of the 10th of April, would put a different construction on this visit?

What, too, is the effect upon the public mind as regards Mr. Philbrick's conduct? Why simply this: that Mr. Fergusson would *not* have acted as he did, but would have continued to attend the case—ergo, that Mr. Jackson has done no more than his duty in taking his place, his conduct being supported by one of the heads of the profession.

One word for the last paragraph, which is, perhaps, better calculated for the public eye.

I can hardly believe any one so bigoted to his creed as to hesitate for a moment when he thought that *life was in danger*; but was not Mr. Fergusson made aware by Dr. Bell of the nature of the case at — park? and was he not also led to understand by the same gentleman that a competent hospital surgeon was already in attendance?

These points may be worthy of notice.

St. George's-square, I am, Sir, yours &c.,
Stamford, Lincolnshire, May, 1858. SPENCER PRATT, M.D.

THE SOUTHAMPTON MEDICAL SOCIETY AND HOMŒOPATHIC QUACKS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following resolution was passed by the Southampton Medical Society on the 4th of December, 1855:—

“That a homœopathic practitioner should not be met in consultation by a member of this Society under any circumstances.”

If our decision can in any way promote the cause you have lately so ably advocated, we shall feel obliged if you will give it insertion in your journal.

We are, Sir, your obliged servants,
J. KING SAMPSON, }
GEO. A. K. LAKE, } Hon. Secs.
Southampton, May, 1858.

PROPOSED QUALIFICATIONS AND TITLES OF DENTAL PRACTITIONERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The members of the dental profession owe you a debt of gratitude for the very able manner in which you have made your readers acquainted with the proceedings of the two Dental Societies in reference to the examination of candidates for a dental diploma; and especially for the good-will you have shown them by your efforts to bring about the union of the two bodies, that their strength and influence might thereby be immeasurably increased.

To promote the same most desirable result, I beg, through the medium of THE LANCET, to lay before the medical and dental professions a plan by which it appears to me the great object common to both Societies—viz., the elevation of dental practitioners by a recognised qualification, and the consequent protection of the public from those who are unqualified; and also the special views of each of the Societies would be attained, and all obstacles to their honourable union thereby removed.

Those who have perused your leading articles on the subject will readily remember what these special views are—that the Odontological Society desire a union with the Royal College of Surgeons, and that the College of Dentists prefer an independent existence; that the Odontological Society wish the examination of candidates to be conducted by Royal College examiners and dental examiners conjoined, while the College of Dentists prefer the examination to be managed solely by dental practitioners.

At present gentlemen practising dentistry style themselves at will surgeon-dentists or dentists, the two designations being to them quite synonymous, and the one or the other of them preferred according to taste; and in the same number of *The British Journal of Dental Science*, Mr. Tomes appears as a dentist and also as a surgeon-dentist—as “Surgeon-Dentist” to the Middlesex Hospital, and “Consulting Dentist” to the London Dental Dispensary. But the public generally do not regard the two designations as synonymous, and have the idea that a surgeon-dentist is a surgeon and also a dentist; and partly on these grounds I base the following propositions:—

1st. That in future dental practitioners be styled surgeon-dentists or dentists, according to their qualification.

2nd. That the title of dentist be granted by a Dental College—formed by the union of the two existing dental bodies—after a prescribed course of study, and an examination such as may be deemed fit to prove the capabilities of candidates for undertaking the ordinary surgical and mechanical duties of the profession.

3rd. That the title of surgeon-dentist be granted by the Dental College to any licentiate or member of a College of Surgeons who passes the same examination as that conferring the title of dentist.

4th. That any one having the title of dentist from the Dental

College be permitted to style himself surgeon-dentist, should he subsequently become a licentiate or member of a College of Surgeons.

5th. That all the members of the Odontological Society and the College of Dentists be entitled, on the union of the two bodies, to style themselves surgeon-dentists.

Such, Mr. Editor, are the heads of a plan which will, I hope, be favourably received by the dental profession; for it seems to me calculated to satisfy the requirements of all parties—the public, dental practitioners, and the medical profession. The public would have a solid foundation for their belief respecting the qualifications of dentists and surgeon-dentists. The two dental societies would obtain their mutual and also their individual wishes; the College of Dentists securing entire independence, and the Odontological Society gaining all the connexion with the College of Surgeons that would ever, in all probability, be accorded them by the council of the College, who, in their reply of March 13th, 1857, to the memorialists of the Society, say—“At the same time the council entertained a strong opinion that the surgical qualification for the proposed examination in dental surgery should be the same as that required for the membership of the College”; an opinion which was not modified by the council in subsequent communications.*

The medical profession, I am very sanguine, will receive my plan favourably, as it gives an honourable place amongst dental practitioners to those of them who, possessing a surgical qualification, may desire to practise as surgeon-dentists.

Having sufficiently occupied your space already, I shall not at present point out other advantages that would, in my opinion, be likely to arise from the adoption of the foregoing proposals; but will, with your permission, take another opportunity of doing so, should they meet with a favourable reception.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. STEWART, F.R.C.S.E.,
Russell-square, May, 1858. Surgeon-Dentist.

PRIVATE HOSPITALS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Some remarks having been made upon myself, in one of your editorial articles of the 8th of May, I beg to state that I have nothing to do with the *management* of the institution referred to, and if it is against *professional propriety* to have accepted the appointment of surgeon to the *Maison de Santé*, Portland-road, I plead guilty to the crime of breach of professional etiquette.

The principle of *maison de santé* is a very old one in the whole civilized world. In this country some very eminent and learned men are attached to private establishments for lunatics, and there is a Home founded in Harley-street on a somewhat similar principle, having highly respectable professional names attached to it. In France and Germany, names respected and dear to science are or have been attached to private institutions, as T. Venel, Heine, Jules Guérin, Civiale, Sichel, Demars, Duval, and others. I do not see clearly the reason why I should have refused the appointment.

It is unfortunate for me not to be known to the writer of the article, but if he had taken the trouble to make inquiry about me amongst his colleagues in THE LANCET, perhaps some one could have given him a satisfactory account of my professional bearing. The gratuitous epithet applied to my late work I leave, as I left my writings, to the judgment of the profession.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY DICK, M.D.
Wimpole-street, Cavendish-square, May, 1858.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having seen in THE LANCET of the 8th instant an article containing censure on the *Maison de Santé* of which I have the management, I beg to elucidate some points respecting it, by which I think you will perceive you have been misinformed on the subject. In the first place, we make no prominent feature of spermatorrhœa or pseudo-spermatorrhœa, and agree with you that numbers are labouring under the erroneous belief that they are suffering from disease. Should any such visit us, care will be taken by our medical officer to disabuse them of the delusion, though I cannot perceive, in a scientific point of view, how one disease is more “filthy” than another.

* The Report lately published by the Odontological Society, and procurable, I dare say, at the Society's rooms, 32A, George-street, Hanover-square, contains the correspondence between the College of Surgeons and the Odontological Society, and also shows very clearly the present position of the two dental bodies.