based on any theoretic views we may entertain respecting the origin of the disease, but should be determined after careful reference to the results of experience.

"Since yellow fever appeared in this place first, in December last, down to the present time, it manifested itself in three separate outbursts, with weeks and months intervening when the general health was very good. I see no reason to alter the opinion which I have in all my reports expressed, and to which I still adhere, that yellow fever has not been propagated in this place by contagion."

The following extracts are from a report which was drawn up by the Deputy-Inspector-General of the forces, Dr. Dempster, and by Dr. Bowerbank, members of the Central Board of Health of Jamaica, in April last, upon the threatened outbreak of the epidemic in Kingston, and addressed to the governor of the island:—

"It appears that, since the end of last year (28th Dec.), yellow fever has not prevailed in the city or port beyond the occurrence of a few sporadic cases, until the middle of March, when it broke out on board the *William Jardine*, an emigrant ship, which arrived a fortnight previously from Trinidad, for the purpose of conveying return coolies to Calcutta."

"They would observe that the opinion of each medical practitioner, under whose care the cases have been hitherto treated, is, that the disease is of a very malignant type. The members of the profession resident in Kingston, although they differ in opinion as to the specific character and immediate causes of the disease, are still unanimous as to its not being contagious or infectious in the ordinary acceptation of these terms. They therefore consider the imposition of quarantine restrictions, as regards this disease to be both unnecessary and cruel."

Among the measures recommended by Drs. Dempster and Bowerbank, are these:—

"That as soon as any individual is attacked (on board a vessel in port) with fever, medical aid should be obtained as early as possible, and the sufferer be removed to some well-ventilated apartment on shore,—as the public hospital.

"That in case of a vessel becoming unhealthy, the unaffected portion of the crew should be landed and kept on shore; and with this object the committee would recommend that some airy and healthy locality should be selected and set aside for their reception.

"They would further suggest that, during the prevalence of sickness, all vessels should be anchored or moored as far as practicable from the shore, and from each other; and instead of the crew sleeping under the fore-castle, they should be permitted to remain on deck, protected by a suitable awning. The practice of roaming about on shore, especially at night, should be strictly prohibited, and the men be confined to their ships.

"That all unnecessary communication between the shore and an infected vessel, particularly by unacclimatized persons, should be avoided; numberless instances proving the localization of the disease on board a ship, and the injurious consequences resulting to those placed within its atmosphere.

"That, as recent experience has demonstrated that vessels laden with coals and guano have been more particularly unhealthy, the committee would advise that instead of the crew being employed to discharge the cargo, this work should be performed by native labourers."

I trust that other medical men in Jamaica, who are so well able (as I know from personal acquaintance) to afford important information respecting the diseases which come under their care, will be induced to give the profession the benefit of their observations on those leading points of practical importance noticed in the preceding extracts. Should the results of their experience not agree with the opinions expressed in these extracts, it is the more desirable that they should be made generally known, as the great end and object of all our inquiries is not the triumph of a mere dogma, but the establishment of a practical truth.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

Fitzroy-square, August, 1853.

G. MILROY.

THE ADVICE GRATIS SYSTEM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a hard-working medical man, let me entreat you to aid in every way the praiseworthy efforts of your correspondent "Alpha," in his noble crusade against the curse of indiscriminate advice gratis. Let me show you how I am robbed by the officers of an hospital in my neighbourhood,—not knowingly or wilfully, for I acquit them of that, but carelessly, to say the least.

I had occasion lately to call upon one of the assistant-surgeons at the hospital, to make an appointment with him, and went at the hour when he was seeing the out-patients. I then found him giving advice and medicine to the child of a most respectable

patient of mine, a well-to-do tradesman in the neighbourhood of the hospital. The grandmother, dressed shabbily for the nonce, had taken the child in. She turned away from me in shame and confusion at being caught in so degrading a position. I complained to my friend the assistant-surgeon, and told him this family generally paid me several pounds annually, being well able to do so; but the only answer I could get was, that if he suspected the persons he was prescribing for were able to pay, he made the porter see that they put something in the poor-box. But, as I said, such compulsory donation of a shilling or so did not remedy the evil; it did not prevent my being robbed of a considerable sum of what I ought fairly and legitimately to get in the ordinary course of my practice.

Again, a tradesman's son sustained a simple fracture of the thigh. He was actually, at the suggestion of a neighbour, (a subscriber to the hospital), taken out of bed in his father's house and sent there, and cured of course gratis. Now the father of this boy employs at least twenty men and keeps as many horses, and has just built three houses for his own private investment. I say, *proh pudor!*

Lastly, the same hospital has appointed a number of general practitioners under the anomalous title of "district accoucheurs," who attend labours in their respective neighbourhoods around the hospital, gratis as far as the cost to the woman. I have not heard whether the governors of the hospital pay; I should rather think not. Now, I can comprehend a hospital doing this for the sake of getting practical instruction for its students, and it may perhaps be allowed to strain a point to do so, but for qualified practitioners to act so, is in my opinion completely suicidal; for are they not either robbing themselves or their neighbours of 15s. or 21s. fees, or depriving the parochial medical officer of the 10s. 6d. fees he would be entitled to by his engagement with the board of guardians. This very day I was called to attend a child in convulsions, three months old, and found that it had been delivered gratuitously by a district accoucheur. The father's wages were a pound weekly, and he was in regular work, (therefore not entitled to parochial aid), a member of a benefit society—in fact, decent people. I asked, "How could you degrade yourself," addressing the mother, "by accepting charity?" She replied "she never had done so until she came into my neighbourhood, where she found the practice so common that she did not see any disgrace in it; she thought that the doctors must either get something by it, or be independent, perhaps both,—a really natural conclusion to draw, when medical men throw away their time and talents, when they have them, thus gratuitously. I cannot call such practice charity; I call it rather touting for a name.

Now, Sir, the remedy for these abuses of the sacred name of charity is very simple. Let the Anti-Advice-Gratis Society make the two following their principal rules:—1. That no physician or surgeon attached to a hospital or dispensary be called in consultation by a member of this Society who knowingly, or after warning, gives advice and medicine, or either or both, to any one in a position to pay for the same. 2. That all members of this Society do undertake to furnish particulars of those who unfairly seek and obtain medicines and advice from the hospitals and other medical institutions in their immediate neighbourhoods; that such members' communication be considered confidential, and be only used by the Society as information to the authorities of the abused charity.

By such rules we should get at the root of the matter; we should punish, as general practitioners, the physician or surgeon who knowingly offended, and we should warn the governors of the charity of the way in which their generosity was abused. Please give my name to "Alpha," as one heartily wishing to co-operate with him, and allow me to remain, Sir,

Your admirer and obedient servant,

Sept. 7, 1853.

A MEMBER OF AN ILL-PAID PROFESSION.

SOOT AS A DEODORIZER OF PRIVIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—We in Carlisle (on the Local Board of Health) have derived great help, at little cost, in the removal of manure, otherwise so perilous, by the immediately subsequent use of a few shovelfuls of soot. The suggestion was made to us by the Rev. Mr. Dew, of St. Cuthbert's Church, and serves to show what important aid may just now be rendered by the co-operation of the clergy and other intelligent men. Soot is, generally, most easily had where quick-lime is scarce, and *vice-versâ*. In Carlisle British cholera prevails abundantly and obstinately; but with the exception of one case that ended fatally, and, on the evidence of two intelligent and experienced medical men, exhibited unequivocally the symptoms of Asiatic cholera, we have

had no clearly marked cholera here. I know of no other cases of death from this or similar diseases at this juncture, except the single one mentioned, and this was a fortnight ago. Carlisle is abundantly supplied with pure river water, (from far above the city,) and our common lodging-houses have long been most carefully regulated. Our operative and poorer classes, too, have been long, and are, undergoing a process of spreading out, or popular evolution, which, by giving to each family their own door and more elbow-room, is clearly productive of immense good. Between our ancient city and the equally old town of Newcastle-on-Tyne, there is daily railway communication, by five trains each way. Cholera rages but sixty miles off, in Newcastle, more or less since the 31st ult.; it has latterly been slaying its five or six scores daily, yet has not in three weeks got possession of Carlisle, though cheap trips, with goodly numbers of passengers, pass both east and west. Let the advocates of contagion or infection (the idea of which is too paralysing to the non-medical community—too natural to the timid and uninformed, to need encouragement)—let them examine these facts, and do the fullest justice to them, since an opposite course is so palpably unfair, unmanly, and impolitic. An old Indian army surgeon and his lady have just told me that the natives have no such idea.

Yours obediently,
Carlisle, Sept. 1853. ROBERT ELLIOT, M.D.

THE ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE. *To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Amongst the various correspondents who have from time to time addressed you on the wrongs of the naval medical service, some have adverted to the very "inferior" treatment our profession receives generally from the Admiralty as compared with the War Office, but none appear to have remarked the instance I wish to bring before your notice. The inspection of a military recruit by a civil surgeon has long been paid by a fee of 2s. 6d. per man; and of late this has been increased, temporarily, but liberally, to 4s. for every man passed; 2s. 6d. as before, for every man rejected. A few civil practitioners hold a sort of naval appointment as "Surgeons and Agents of Sick Quarters;" and they, for a similar service, "are allowed one shilling per man."—Vide Regulations and Instructions for Sick Quarters, page 15.

There is an armed force in this country which treats "the doctors" even worse than the Admiralty. It does not pay for the examination of its recruits at all! The army surgeons are informed, that it "is a part of their duty to inspect recruits for the Constabulary;" and when an unlucky civilian placed in temporary charge of troops asks for his 2s. 6d. for a police recruit, he is told, firstly, "that there are no funds out of which to pay him;" and, secondly, that it is part of his duty to perform this service gratuitously!

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Sept. 1853. AN IRISH SURGEON.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION ACT. *To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—This Act being "law of the land," however lightly Parliament estimates the services of medical men, it is, I suspect, incumbent upon them to carry out the intentions of the legislature, and the question arises, how this is best to be done both for the community at large, and with fairness to the members of the profession collectively and individually, as well in their relations to the public as to each other? The problem to be solved is not a very simple one.

I have, through the medium of my esteemed friend, the Chairman of our Board of Guardians, suggested a conference between a committee of the guardians and the medical men resident in the Orsett Union on the subject. This may give a hint to others.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Orsett, Sept. 1853. DAVID CORBET, M.D.

LIGATURE ON THE FEMORAL VEIN. *To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—On reading an interesting lecture of my friend Mr. Solly, on the subject of diseased joints, I find allusion made to the dangers incidental to the placing of a ligature on the femoral and other large veins in cases of amputation.

No surgeon can hesitate to admit that there is great risk in tying veins: nevertheless, hitherto such a procedure has in

many instances been necessary to save the loss of blood. I think that in many, if not in all cases, the necessity of tying the vein may be obviated by a most simple method. I amputated a man's thigh some time ago by the double flap operation, as is customary in the present day, and was much annoyed by the continued hæmorrhage from the femoral vein. The vein was cut through obliquely, as is very often the case in the amputation by the *double flap*, and hence a greater tendency to bleed, as the vessel could not retract within its sheath; I therefore divided the vein transversely, but still the bleeding continued. I now drew the vein forwards from its sheath, and divided it transversely; it retracted, but still continued to pour out blood. Under these circumstances, I *puckered up the sheath itself and tied it*, and no further bleeding occurred. The method is simple, and I think not unworthy of attention.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
St. Helen's-place, Sept. 1853. JOHN ADAMS.

THE CHOLERA.

ALTHOUGH this disease is abating in malignity and frequency in Newcastle, yet the abatement is neither steady nor satisfactory, for the number of deaths is fluctuating. Amongst the victims are two medical men—Mr. George Robert Irons, of the firm of Messrs. Paget and Irons, Savile-row, aged thirty-seven; and Dr. Malcombe, who lately commenced practice. The former gentleman had been without a night's rest for a week preceding his death, and for some days had suffered from diarrhoea. Dr. Malcombe was seized with the malady, and prescribed for himself, but got worse. A medical gentleman was called in, who found him in a state of collapse, and he soon died.

At a meeting of the Board of Guardians, Dr. Gavin stated that the medical officers had been instructed to give in returns daily of the cases they had visited; but all had not done so, in consequence of which the returns were incomplete. It was exceedingly important, however, to procure full and accurate returns, inasmuch as they formed the basis upon which measures were to be taken for the saving of human life.

Mr. Greenhow, surgeon to the gaol, made a statement to the Board to the effect that he had been successful in arousing three patients from collapse by the external application of burnt brandy. The cases to begin with seemed entirely hopeless, so much so that a coffin had been ordered for one of the patients, who seemed now in a fair way of recovery.

On the recommendation of Dr. Gavin, instructions were ordered to be given to Mr. T. Oliver to prepare a coloured plan showing the precise places where the epidemic prevailed on its last visitation, and also those in which it was prevailing now. Dr. Gavin believed the plan would show that the cases were chiefly confined to certain districts.

Dr. Gavin also stated that, by the advice of Mr. Grainger, the General Board of Health had consented to send down an engineer to assist in carrying out any arrangements as to cleansing operations, and the closing of houses unfit for habitation. He also handed in a statement signed by Dr. Headlam to the effect that he (Dr. Headlam) entirely agreed with Dr. Gavin, that only one body should be interred in one grave, and that each grave should be of sufficient depth to admit five feet of soil upon the coffin and below the ordinary level of the ground, and that three feet of space should exist between each grave. The statement was handed in, in consequence of some observation on Wednesday, to the effect that Mr. Grainger and Dr. Headlam did not coincide in that view.

Mr. Clayton observed that in the cemeteries they were sparing of their ground, and would object to three feet between each grave.

Dr. Gavin stated that he merely spoke from the result of the most extensive and minute enquiries which had been made during the last few years on the subject of interments.

The resignation of three assistants in Mr. Winship's district was accepted. They objected, it appeared, to the house-to-house visitation system, as recommended by Dr. Gavin. The latter said the duty was much more severe than their former duty of merely looking in at the cases; but it was exceedingly important to be carried out if the disease was to be stopped. Too many cases had been allowed to run on to cholera, and he mentioned that one visitor who arrived by the mail train that morning at five o'clock, and was set on to No. 2 district a few hours afterwards, discovered in a short space of time no less than thirteen cases of cholera which had not been attended by any medical man.

Dr. George Fife made a representation to the Board to the