the end of which was fixed an olive-shaped body, made of unpolished china, upon which mere contact would leave a mark of the projectile, and prove its presence. M. Charrière made several instruments of this kind, composed of a silver stem, ending in a china knob. The mere rubbing of this instrument against lead is sufficient to make a stain, which neither the soft parts nor the morbid secretions could obliterate; a simple rotation of the instrument upon its axis fixes upon it a kind of meridian.

"But affirmations of mine are not sufficient—proof is the main thing; nor has this been wanting, for, with this instrument, Professor Zanetti became so certain of the presence of the ball that he forthwith extracted it.

"Other instruments have been proposed to diagnose a ball at the bottom of a wound. M. Favre, Professor at Marseilles, has invented the following:—Two conducting wires are placed in a sheath, or the two electrodes may be covered by an isolating substance. These wires are in communication with a battery of only one couple, and a galvanometer is fastened on one of the wires. If you introduce the end of these into a wound, the contact of the soft parts, the bones, or pus, is not sufficient to establish a current; but if the ends come in contact with a metallic body, the needle of the galvanometer will rise, this being a proof that the circuit is complete. Only one couple, however, should be used, so as to avoid the decomposition of the fluids in the wound, which decomposition would immediately give rise to a current."

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE LANCASHIRE DISTRESS MEDICAL FUND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg gratefully to acknowledge, from the proprietors of THE LANCET, the receipt, on behalf of the Medical Kitchen, of the sum of £20, the cheque for which I had great pleasure in handing over to the president of the committee, the Rev. Dr. Rushton.

The necessity for the formation of this and similar establishments throughout the stricken districts of Lancashire is being painfully felt by those medical men who are called upon to cope with diseases greatly aggravated, if not actually induced, by that state of semi-starvation to which so large a proportion of our operatives have now been reduced; and I am sure the members of the medical profession owe no small debt of gratitude to THE LANCET for inaugurating a movement which cannot fail greatly to strengthen their hands, and enable them to combat disease with some measure of success. Without some such scheme, the lives of hundreds must inevitably be sacrificed. Nourishment and warmth, as well as physic, are required; and without these adjuncts, the utmost efforts of the medical man will avail but little, when contending against disease occurring in persons whose powers of vitality have been reduced, by starvation, to a minimum.

Our "Kitchen" has only been at work for a few days, but sufficiently long to prove how great a boon it must eventually become to both patient and medical man.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

35, King-street, Blackburn, Lancashire,
Dec. 2nd, 1862.

EDWARD S. MORLEY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The noble example you have set and propounded in your last week's publication will, I trust, be followed by those of our profession who are well-to-do, by which means the sufferings of those who daily come under our care may be promptly alleviated, by affording the means of procuring those necessities in the way of food and stimulants of which they so frequently stand in need, thus prolonging convalescence, or being in a state of debility which ultimately leads to further, and perhaps fatal, disease.

Out of a population of 56,000, most of whom are employed

in cotton manufactures, there are upwards of 26,000 receiving relief—8000 from the Board of Guardians, and upwards of 18,000 from the various district relief committees that have been formed to distribute the liberal voluntary contributions, that have been hitherto given at an average rate of 2s. per head per week, and in addition 1 cwt. of coals, also bedding and clothing as fast as it can be obtained and distributed. These district committees are also empowered to add to this relief in cases of sickness on production of a medical certificate; but there are very many cases sent to us of debility, where there is no particular disease—a state brought on by long-continued insufficient and impoverished diet, predisposing to the development of fever, by exposure to cold or changes, which at other times the body would be able to resist, as their clothing and bedding have been for a long time in safe custody with the pawnbrokers, to whom the people have applied before seeking relief elsewhere. Many of these have had comfortably furnished homes, and never thought that they should ever be in a position to ask relief. To many the medical attendant has frequently out of his own resources (which are now very seriously curtailed) to act as relieving officer; and in cases of sickness and distress can anyone fulfil those duties more acceptably to the recipients?

To add to our present distress, some of the wards of our Infirmary have been closed, in consequence of want of funds, many being unable to keep up their subscriptions; so that there will be a large deficit at the end of the year. *Our poor-rates amount to 7s. 6d. in the pound.* More than half will be unable to pay; so that those who are able will be doubly burthened.

So far, thank God, we have no epidemic of fever, although isolated cases occur more frequently than usual; and I hope, by doing all we can to keep up the physical strength, by sufficient food, clothing, and bedding, we may escape such a calamity, which, when it does occur, is no respecter of persons.

I remain, Sir, yours very truly,

Stockport, Dec. 1862.

WILLIAM RAYNER, M.D., J.P.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have much pleasure in contributing to the above fund; but as the want of medical comforts &c. will rather increase than diminish as the winter goes on, I would suggest that our efforts should be directed to the creation of a monthly (or weekly) income. With this view, I herewith forward £1, and will send a like sum on the 1st of the ensuing four months, or longer if necessary.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY W. KIALMARK, M.R.C.S.

Princes-square, Bayswater, Dec. 1st, 1862.

Dr. S. D. LÆS, Mayor of Ashton-under-Lyne, writes as follows:—

"Our sewing-classes of 6676 young women, and men's classes of 1464, are surprising establishments to meet the requirements of the day. I mention the last week's return: some hundreds will be added ere long."

THE PREVALENCE OF EPIDEMICS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—For the last twelve months or more there has been a considerable immunity from disease, especially epidemic disease, and a lessened mortality has been the consequence. This lessened mortality has not been, and is not, confined to one district and class of people in England, &c., but extends to all districts and all classes of people. Therefore to say that the diminished means of expenditure in the manufacturing districts largely accounts for the above phenomena, is illogical, untrue, and anything but comprehensive, and cannot be entertained as a solution of the problem; for both those people and districts, affected or unaffected by the cotton famine, are alike under the one general influence—an influence of immediate good, so far as present health and mortality are concerned. But what of that? Had we not previously increased disease and mortality, and yet a more prosperous time? Superficial observers, and, perhaps, those interested in low earnings, gladly and hurriedly avail themselves of the latter facts, and cry out that diminished means of expenditure—an expenditure limiting the consumption of luxuries—make themselves felt in lessened disease and mortality; but remember, on the other hand, a little more descent in diminished means, and you will have people crying