patient, this source of dyscrasia should surely be avoided. But at the same time the disease is not to be "allowed to run its natural course." It is our business to control nature in all disease, and why not in this? Make the body healthy in all its doings. We can. We have alteratives and tonics of various kinds, adaptable to each want in each case; we have good food and good wine to supply the wear and tear; and if to the mind we can give hope and a cheerful confidence in the means employed, we *shall* control the natural progress of the disease, and obtain, as in numerous instances at the Cancer Hospital, an inert atrophied tumour, which shall have lost all its baneful influence. As a consequence life shall be prolonged, and its duties be performed, as well as if the patient had passed through an attack of gout or pleurisy.

I remain, Sir, very faithfully yours,

WEEDEN COOKE, M.R.C.S.,
Surgeon to the Royal Free Hospital, and
the Cancer Hospital.

Upper Berkeley-street, Portman-
square, March, 1859.

THE MEDICAL SERVICE OF THE ROYAL AND INDIAN ARMIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The letter of "An Assistant-Surgeon of the Royal Army," in your number of the 19th instant, contains several mis-statements. The India House does not grant £100 to assistant-surgeons going to India. Your correspondent does not appear to be aware that the pay and time of service of Indian officers commence only on their arrival in India, and that by going round the Cape, as he suggests, for the sake of saving £50, they lose three months' pay and three months' time of service. Detachment duty is found by every officer in the service to be anything but remunerative; pay, full batta, and head money, all taken together, being barely sufficient to cover the expenses of travelling, &c., and in many cases failing to do so. The pay of an assistant-surgeon in charge of a native infantry regiment is not £540, but £500, or £470, according to the station; subscription to the funds, about £40, to be deducted. No assistant-surgeon is ever allowed to hold a civil appointment, and at the same time to have permanent charge of a regiment. Should a young assistant-surgeon have a wife and family, and nothing but his pay to live on, although "happiness has dictated the choice and wisdom guided the act," poverty is sure to be the inevitable result. It certainly is strange that, amidst his praises of the Indian army, "An Assistant-Surgeon of the Royal Army" appears to be of opinion that the greatest calamity that happened to him in India was his being posted to a sepoy regiment.

I am, Sir, yours most obediently,

AN ASSISTANT-SURGEON, INDIAN ARMY.

London, March, 1859.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have noticed with satisfaction several letters in the late numbers of THE LANCET, calling attention to some of the numerous grievances under which the Indian medical service groans. In the hope that you, Sir, will take up the matter, and compel the recognition of the claims of the Indian medical officer (as you have already done as regards the Queen's Army and the Royal Navy), I venture to ask a small portion of the space of your powerful journal to make known another grievance which none of your correspondents have hitherto touched upon.

A year and a half back, the Marquis of Dalhousie, on resigning the Governor-Generalship of India, expressed his opinions of the medical service in these words:—"It is impossible to conceive how such a system can have been maintained so long on the strength that it has been, and therefore it ought to be—a system which treats a member of a learned profession—a man of ability, skill, and experience—as inferior in position to an ensign or cornet just entering on the study of the pay and audit regulations."

This liberal-minded nobleman then proposed some changes in the service; one of which was that an assistant-surgeon, after seven years' service, being in charge of a regiment, should receive the charge pay of full surgeon (not, however, the regimental pay). The *ci-devant* Court of Directors thought it sufficient that the assistant-surgeon should receive this extra pay after ten years' service instead of seven; and although forced into this stretch of liberality, they could not avoid accompanying the concession with an order extremely galling to the service generally, and especially to the junior members

thereof. They divided the assistant-surgeons into two divisions—styled those who had served ten years 1st Class assistant-surgeons, and those who had not served that time 2nd Class assistant-surgeons!

"What's in a name?" In this name is implied inferiority. The M.D. of any university, the fellow or member of any college, the man who has passed the most difficult professional examination in the world, the "Colossal" of the Indian Army Board, the man of science and professional skill, the accomplished physician or surgeon, must now, if he enters the Indian army, be content to be designated 2nd Class assistant-surgeon for ten long years!

Why should this be? Why, if there must be a difference, is not the junior called staff assistant-surgeon, as is the case in the Queen's home army? Nay, why should the term assistant-surgeon be retained at all? Why should the medical officer be, as is the case in the Indian service, a subaltern after sixteen years' service? If he enters the service at the average age of twenty-four or twenty-five, he is a subaltern at forty, and has subaltern pay and allowances.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

THREE DIPLOMAS, YET A 2ND CLASS
ASSISTANT-SURGEON.

Derby, March, 1859.

GRAY'S "DESCRIPTIVE AND SURGICAL ANATOMY."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I wish briefly to call the attention of your readers to the review of Gray's "Anatomy" in the *Medical Times and Gazette* of March 5th, 1859. I feel sure that, after comparing the book with the review, they will be ashamed that such a review should appear in any medical paper. I will leave Mr. Gray to answer the charges there brought against him of dishonesty; probably he may do this in the next edition,—*en attendant*, let us give him his due. I have carefully examined his work, and have come to the conclusion (which I do not state anonymously) that the book is especially adapted to the medical student who has to complete his study of anatomy by the end of the second winter session—the minimum required by the Royal College of Surgeons. It is illustrated in such a manner as to command unqualified praise, and I feel sure that those conversant with the teaching of anatomy and the requirements of the student will say that Mr. Gray has done good work by showing us the style of book needed at the present day.

By all means let a student possess his Quain, and work with his Ellis, Holden, or "Dublin Dissector;" but, preach as you will, the majority of men will do neither: hitherto they have got on better with Wilson, and henceforth I predict they will get on faster and better with Gray.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

GEORGE B. HALFORD,

Lecturer on Anatomy, Grosvenor-place School
of Medicine.

March, 1859.

NOVEL SUBSTITUTE FOR A FEMALE CATHETER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The letters of Dr. Duke and Mr. Park in THE LANCET of the 12th and 19th instant, have brought to my remembrance a case which occurred in my practice many years since, in which I made use of a "novel substitute." Visiting one day a female patient suffering with paralysis, at the distance of six or seven miles from my residence, I found her labouring under retention of urine. Unfortunately, I had no female catheter in my pocket, and so, under the stimulus of necessity, I adopted the following expedient:—Whilst reflecting on what was to be done, I perceived in one corner of the bed-chamber a bundle of gleaned corn, and the thought suggested itself, cannot I extemporize a catheter in one of those stalks of wheaten straw? So selecting a well-adapted specimen, I reduced it to a proper length, and having shielded the sharp edge with a coating of sealing-wax, introduced it without any difficulty, and, to my great satisfaction, relieved the bladder.

The moral I would draw from these substitutions would be in the shape of a bit of advice to my younger professional brethren: never in country practice go without your case of pocket instruments, for the want of them may sometimes put you to great inconvenience.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

March, 1859.

T. W. W. SMART, M.R.C.S.