builders, Messrs. Glenn and Co., fixed the plate and applied the mortar, leaving a space to be completed by his lordship. The president then adjusted the mortar. The stone was lowered, and the square, plumb-line, &c., applied under the inspection of his lordship, who then struck three blows with a mallet, and declared the stone to be "well and properly laid." Three hearty cheers were then given. The Bishop of Winchester, as one of the vice-presidents, returned thanks, in the name of the Council, to his lordship, for having condescended to lay the first stone of the Medical Benevolent College. The children then sang the 100th Psalm, after which a great number of ladies placed their oblations on the stone, amounting to many hundreds of pounds. The band of the Royal Marines were in attendance, and played repeatedly during the ceremony. The company then adjourned to the *déjeuné* prepared under an immense tent. Lord Manvers presided, supported by the Bishop of Winchester and many influential gentlemen. The collation was served up in the most perfect style, and the company were highly gratified at the arrangements which had been made by the Council for their comfort. The usual toasts upon such occasions were given and responded to with enthusiasm; the "Success to the Medical College" called forth repeated plaudits, in which the ladies joined with enthusiasm. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the weather, the day being almost cloudless, and the company amounting to a multitude. A gentleman well able to form an opinion states that at least five thousand persons were on the ground. The sum collected amounted to nearly £3000. It is due to one most benevolent gentleman (Mr. Winthorne) to state, that through his medical attendant, Mr. Sankey, of Dover, he sent the munificent sum of 500 guineas. Altogether, the ceremony and the attendance were worthy of the occasion. It was a noble tribute by thousands of the best and the fairest amongst us to the cause of benevolence and charity—to the suffering members of a profession whose only aim is to do good, and whose claims upon the gratitude of the public have upon the present occasion been amply and nobly acknowledged. The form of the procession was as follows:—

Parochial School Children, with the Master and Mistress, two and two.
 Parish Beadles of Epsom.
 Churchwardens and Overseers of Epsom.
 The Vicar of Epsom.
 Members of the Council of the College and Friends, two and two.
 Vice-Presidents, two and two.
 Trustees, two and two.
 Builder carrying the Mallet.
 Assistants, carrying the Square, Plumb-line, &c. &c.
 Architect and Honorary Secretary.
 Vice-President carrying the Engraved Plate on a Cushion.
 Vice-President carrying the Bottle for the Coins, Scroll, &c., on a Cushion.
 Treasurer carrying the Coins on a Cushion.
 President carrying the Trowel on a Cushion.
 The Bishop and Clergy, two and two.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

GRATUITOUS ADVICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The thanks of medical men are due to you for the mode in which you have exposed the intolerable evils under which the profession groans from the present system of gratuitous medical attendance on public charities, and gratuitous medical relief.

There can be no doubt but that this is at the bottom of the great grievance which afflicts the profession—viz., inadequate remuneration. The extent to which this system is carried appears to have led people to imagine that the payment of a medical man is rather a compliment than a duty. I am certain, from what I have heard from old practitioners, that as this baneful system has gained ground the emoluments of the profession have steadily decreased. Were the honorary appointments to hospitals and dispensaries awarded by the public on professional grounds, some excuse for the gratuitous services of the profession might be set up; but as every one knows that these appointments are in nine cases out of ten divided by the votes of unprincipled governors, who look neither to the interests of the patients nor the promotion of actual science, but are actuated by the purest motives of self-interest, hypocritical pretensions to sanctity, humbug of every description, the influence of aristocracy or of wealth, or, at the very best, feelings of private friendship, I think

it high time that the profession, as a body, should stand upon the principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and should firmly resist the encroachment of the public. Not a jot of credit is given to us for all this gratuitous work. Most people believe, when they see us canvassing for these appointments, and humbly addressing "my lords, ladies, and gentlemen," that we are to be well paid in some way or other, and those who do know something of the matter, as men of the world, pity us as fools. If the medical profession were properly paid for their public and private services, instead of being the worst remunerated class in her Majesty's dominions, we would be the best. What we want is union, and that 'tis I hope your lesson will at last force upon us.

There is one branch of the profession in which I have had very much experience—I mean legal medicine, from which I could draw several illustrations of the mode in which we are treated, and from which I shall give one or two which have occurred since I last addressed you on the subject.

In the summer of 1851, I was concerned in the investigation of three poisoning cases, in the west and south-west angle of Northumberland. In one of these cases, by the order of the coroner, I disinterred the remains of a man buried for twelve years in the remote village of Knarsdale; I brought the remains to Newcastle, and after a long investigation, I succeeded in detecting arsenic. The remains belonged to the former husband of a woman charged with having poisoned a second husband, whose body also I examined. She was brought to trial for the death of the second husband, but there was little evidence, except my positive statement of the presence of arsenic, and the grand jury threw out the bill.

I applied to the judge for payment in both cases, the magistrates having refused to give more than the fee of two guineas, and supported my demand of fifty guineas for the exhumation case in particular, by certificates from Professors Christison, Johnston of Durham, Taylor, Letheby, Herapath of Bristol, and Dr. Brett of Liverpool. His lordship coolly remarked, that he believed medical men were not sufficiently paid in such cases, "but that they ought not to have a profit," meaning, I suppose, that if we were paid for the reagents used we might consider ourselves very well off! The observation was made in court, and I could not help thinking what a heavenly court of justice it would be if judges, counsel, and attorneys, all came there without hope of profit!

For this case then I never received any remuneration, as there was no coroner's inquest. And, at the present moment, the county of Northumberland, and the towns of Newcastle-on-Tyne and Berwick-upon-Tweed, are in my debt for similar services, for which I suppose I shall get neither money nor thanks. And yet a medical man in a case of the kind is of more real use than judge, counsel, attorneys, and jury.

I could not help indulging in a grim internal smile when upon one occasion where I was employed not to give evidence, but an opinion upon medical evidence, Mr. Justice Coleridge remarked that I appeared to have devoted myself in great part to legal medicine, and that there were parties he understood who, as he expressed it, "made a very good living by doing so;" the fact being that for my attendance that day on behalf of the Crown I received the magnificent sum of one guinea!

I know that other gentlemen connected with medico-legal practice, and especially with toxicological science, complain as I do, and feel deeply the grievances under which we labour. But who is to apply the remedy? Most of the parties eminent in the practice of legal medicine have offered to join me in a petition to parliament on the subject, which several members have promised me to support, but of what avail would it be? We seem to be destined, as Mr. Wakley stated, in his seat in Parliament, to be persecuted. No, the plan to rid us of our many grievances is for the profession to form a grand combination, and refuse like other professions to do gratuitous work, and then we should soon bring the public to its senses.

Your obedient servant,

Newcastle-on-Tyne, July, 1853.

ROBERT M. GLOVER.

ON YELLOW FEVER ON BOARD SHIPS OF WAR AND OTHER VESSELS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In further illustration of this important subject, I will bring under the notice of the profession, through the pages of your journal, the leading circumstances connected with the severe outbreak of yellow fever on board two ships of war. In both instances the occurrences took place at Barbadoes, and about the same period of the year, although an interval of ten years elapsed between the two. Those readers who wish to make themselves acquainted with their minuter details I refer to "The Fever at

Boa Vista in 1845-6, by Dr. King, R.N., Inspector of Hospitals and Fleets," and to the parliamentary paper, entitled "Copies of Extracts from Despatches from the Governor of Barbadoes respecting H.M.S. *Dauntless*," issued last March.

H.M. troop-ship *Crocodile*, having embarked a detachment of the 81st Regiment, consisting of 208 men, thirty women, and forty-seven children, 285 in all, sailed on the 16th December, 1842, from St. Kitt's for Barbadoes. The accommodation for the troops on board was, as is too frequently the case, very insufficient; they were all crowded together on the lower deck, where the ventilation was exceedingly defective, and due cleanliness could not be maintained. No sickness existed on board at the time of sailing, nor was there any recognised yellow fever in St. Kitt's either then or for some months before. On the 19th, only three days afterwards, fever made its appearance among the crew, and every day afterwards fresh cases occurred. One of these proved fatal before the vessel arrived at Barbadoes. The exact date of her arrival is not given, but it appears to have been on the 22nd or 23rd. The troops were at once landed and marched into barracks. Several of the men sickened on the day after landing, and were at once sent to the Military Hospital. The ship's company were encamped on shore, where they remained in tents till the 18th of January; the sick were transferred to the Military Hospital. The results of removing the crew from ship-board seems to have been promptly satisfactory; for only two fresh cases of fever occurred among them while they were on shore. Within forty-eight hours, however, after they were re-embarked, it again broke out among them, and in the course of a week eleven were added to the sick-list. In consequence of this it was deemed right to send them on shore a second time, and to have the ship thoroughly fumigated and limewashed. "I was informed," says Dr. King, who arrived at Barbadoes at this time, "by Mr. M'Farlane, assistant-surgeon, that a considerable number of the soldiers were attacked with fever on the day after their second debarkation from the *Crocodile*, of whom seven or eight died at the Military Hospital with the usual symptoms of yellow fever; and, on inspecting his sick-book, I found that there were then fifteen patients on the sick-list, and fourteen in hospital, suffering from fever, diarrhoea, and dysentery. Eight persons belonging to the ship had died since the commencement of the fever, and several of the patients at the hospital were in a precarious, if not a hopeless, condition."

In the first week of February the crew, &c., were again re-embarked to proceed on their voyage. Again did fever break out among them; and as it now spread with even greater rapidity and virulence than before, it was determined to land the troops a third time, and that the ship should be sent to England with none but the crew on board. The salutary effects of landing the men were strikingly manifest on this as on the former occasions, and the further progress of disease was arrested.

It is highly satisfactory to learn that, although there had been free communication between the men of the 81st and other soldiers in the barracks, at the time of their arrival and afterwards, no case of fever occurred among the latter, and also that the inhabitants of Bridgetown did not suffer in the least, notwithstanding the almost daily intercourse which took place with the sailors, who were encamped a short distance from it.

Upon one or two points connected with the history of the *Crocodile* sickness there is a little difference of statement between Dr. King's account and the oral evidence of Dr. Maclean, Deputy-Inspector of Military Hospitals, as recorded at page 323 of the second report on "Quarantine" by the General Board of Health; but substantially they agree, and serve to strengthen each other. Dr. Maclean says—"About thirty soldiers were at the time" (when the fever cases were admitted—G. M.) "in the hospital. The soldiers were cautioned not to mix with the sick sailors, but no steps were adopted to prevent intercourse. Dr. Hardy attended the sick sailors, and continued healthy. None of the orderlies in attendance upon the sick sailors and soldiers, excepting the soldiers already mentioned, took the disease."

Dr. Maclean adds that neither he nor Dr. Birrel regarded this exceptional case as one of yellow fever.

The case of H.M. steam-frigate *Dauntless* affords equally striking evidence of the salutary effects of promptly landing the sick from a vessel infected with yellow fever. She arrived at Barbadoes on the 16th of last November, from St. Thomas', when the pestilence, as has been already seen from the cases of H.M.S. *Highflyer*, and of the mail steamers *La Plata* and *Esk*, was prevailing at the time with great malignancy among the shipping. Within twenty-one hours after leaving St. Thomas' yellow fever appeared on board the *Dauntless*, and rapidly proved most destructive. It was of the most virulent type. Forty-one cases had already occurred, and of these eleven had proved fatal when she reached Barbadoes. It was at once resolved, upon the recommendation of the medical authorities, both civil and

military, that the crew should be landed,—the sick to be sent without delay to the military hospital, and the unattacked to be encamped out in tents on shore as speedily as arrangements could be made. As long as any portion of the ship's company remained on board fresh cases were daily occurring among them, so that there is good reason to believe that if the entire landing had been effected at once, and without loss of time, many valuable lives would have been saved.

It is earnestly to be hoped that a full account of the fever of the *Dauntless* will speedily be made public, either by the surgeon or by Dr. Bryson, to whom the profession has been indebted for so much important information on the diseases of the naval service. The frightful mortality—exceeding, I believe, even that of the *Eclair*—gives an unusually painful interest to the whole history, and naturally suggests the idea that surely there must have been something very faulty in the sanitary condition and arrangements of the ship, or in the protective and defensive measures adopted, to account for such terrible consequences, occurring, too, be it remembered, in the immediate vicinity of several of our own colonies. However this may be, it appears to be universally acknowledged by every one who interested himself in behalf of the suffering crew, including not only the medical officers of both services, but also the governor of the island, Sir William Colebrooke, and Captain Halsted, the commander of the *Dauntless*, that the speedy removal of the men on shore prevented still more disastrous results, and this, too, without the slightest detriment to the health of any on shore. Mr. Denny, surgeon of the 34th Regiment, writes thus: "Although sixty-one men of the *Dauntless* have been treated in the wards of the hospital, indiscriminately intermingled with the soldiers of that corps affected with various complaints, in no instance has any individual been attacked under such circumstances, nor has any hospital attendant suffered;" and Captain Halsted, in returning his thanks to the governor for the generous kindness shown to his crew by the people of Barbadoes, expressly states that "in no single instance, whether in the garrison or in the community, has the disease of the *Dauntless* been communicated to others."

I cannot close this communication without expressing my admiration of the paper by Dr. Cumming, entitled "The Yellow Fever in the West Indies," in *THE LANCET* of May 28. It is replete with pregnant facts, and well deserves the thoughtful perusal of all interested in the subject. I would, however, enter my caveat against the soundness of the practical conclusion in that passage where Dr. Cumming says, "If I thought yellow fever the least contagious I should be one of the warmest advocates for a quarantine of at least forty days, for no less would suffice." I shall defer the reasons for my demurring to some future opportunity. May his appeal to his brother officers in the service of the R.M. Steam Company meet with the response which it ought!

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
Fitzroy-square, June, 1853. GAVIN MILROY.

ON THE PHYSIOLOGICAL USES OF THE GANGLIONIC NERVOUS SYSTEM.

To the Editor of *THE LANCET*.

SIR,—In *THE LANCET* for June 25 is a report of an interesting paper read by Dr. Davey at the London Medical Society, on the Primary, Essential, and Independent Function of the Ganglionic System of Nerves, accompanied with some "startling" statements in support of that doctrine. The doctor also remarks upon the silence upon such a truth observable in our standard works on physiology, of which he names several.

There is one, however, which he has not named, and of which he is doubtless in ignorance, and of which I have written to him privately; but justice to the dead compels me to name that work to you, and to beg your insertion of this note in *THE LANCET*. The work is entitled "Rudiments of Physiology, by Dr. Fletcher," published many years since, but establishing on an immutable basis the function of the great sympathetic nerve.

It is beyond my power to speak of that "great" work, though not large, in such a way as to induce the multitude in our profession who know it not to read it; but one day, when a distinct course of Lectures on the "Institutes of Medicine" shall be required to be delivered in London, then I think it possible, under the healthy influence of the consideration of such a subject, some indefatigable scientific person may arise, and bring to light truths taught before 1830 by the late Dr. Fletcher, and rescue from oblivion the writings of a man whose works need only to be read to be admired and believed. Strange fate, that in 1853 a doctrine which I was taught more than twenty years