—three individuals of one family residing in it having been cut off by that devastating pestilence. I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

MARTIN A. EVANS, M.D.

Clifden Dispensary, County Galway, Ireland,
January 14th, 1834.

LETTER FROM DR. TYTLER, WITH REMARKS ON THE FOREGOING COMMUNICATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have to return you my sincere acknowledgments for your kindness in allowing me to peruse the letter of Dr. Evans, of the Clifden Dispensary. It will, no doubt, be in the recollection of many of your readers, I mean, those of them who attended the discussions on the Rice-and-Cholera question at the *London Medical Society*, that Dr. James Johnson vehemently reiterated his sole *dictum* (in opposition to the facts stated by me) that diseased rice had not reached Ireland, and that the cholera prevailed in that country, where the inhabitants lived solely on “buttermilk and potatoes.” Such was the unqualified assertion of Dr. Johnson, and which he has since that period thought proper to repeat in print in the last number of his *Journal*,—forming part of an extraordinary string of remarks, the nature and object of which I have in vain endeavoured to comprehend. The erroneousness of Dr. Johnson’s iterated and reiterated assertion is, however, at length fully exposed in the letter of Dr. Evans. For we have it upon the authority of that Physician, that “damaged rice” has been in Ireland “since the season of the dearth of provisions of the year 1830,” and that the damaged rice thus existing in Ireland, has “all the characteristics of the *bad rice* described by Dr. Tytler.” Yet did Dr. Johnson, in the *Medical Society*, most vehemently deny the existence of that rice in Ireland. Nay more, we are informed by Dr. Evans, “that the bad rice described by Dr. Tytler has found its way into the remotest parts of Ireland, and that the house in which it was found was the second attacked by cholera in the district of Galway.” Here, then, I have the satisfaction of saying, under God’s mercy, that not only is my veracity completely vindicated with reference to the facts stated by me regarding Ireland, but that the poisonous rice and cholera have been found co-existent, not only in the same district, but even in the same house, in the year 1830, in Ireland; and, consequently, Dr. James Johnson’s assertions, bold and unqualified as they were, were founded in error, and proceeded from a positive want of knowledge of the facts

connected with this most important subject.

With respect to the circumstances of the highly interesting case communicated by Dr. Evans, I beg to observe, that in India an instance occurred some years ago of two children affected with cholera, after eating part of a cake mixed with rice; and that, in 1822, the wife of Bousier, a citizen of Paris, and other individuals, were tried and their lives put in the utmost jeopardy, in consequence of having been suspected of Bousier’s murder, he having been poisoned by a meal of rice, which he ate for his breakfast. An account of this case I shall do myself the pleasure of forwarding to you at an early period: and you will probably be disposed to coincide with me in opinion, that this part of the subject, which bears upon the fact of individuals being suspected of poisoning their neighbours who have unfortunately partaken of deleterious rice, is by no means the least deserving of attention, in the numerous questions to which an inquiry into the use of noxious rice gives rise.

At length have I the gratification of being fully aware, that the circumstances connected with deleterious rice have attracted, and are daily exciting, the attention of the most eminent members of the profession both in London and Edinburgh. Previous to my recent departure from the metropolis of Scotland, Dr. Mallison, of Picardy-place, Edinburgh, informed me, that a specimen of koora, or kun, had been subjected to analysis by two eminent chemists, and that an oleaginous matter had been detected as a constituent of it, and which, there is reason to believe, possesses analogous properties to those which characterise *croton oil*. Here, then, I may, consequently, consider, that a stupendous revolution, which your most valuable publication has been materially instrumental in producing, is near its accomplishment in science. For medical men are now beginning to occupy their talents and apply their knowledge in a manner worthy of themselves and the profession to which they belong, by directing their researches to ascertain the particular constituents of the poisonous principle which pervades certain vegetable substances used as food, and bestows the dreadful noxious properties which they are known to possess, on vitiated kinds of farinaceous grain.

In conclusion I beg to remark, that there is now placed on record the following well-supported facts, regarding the dreadful effects produced by the use of deleterious rice in Great Britain, since the origin of *morbus oryzeus* in 1817:—

. In 1818 the cholera was epidemic in England, and at that period rice flour was mixed in large quantities with the bread flour of the country.

In 1822, rice produced serious effects in a public institution in London.

About 1826, very deleterious effects were occasioned in a family at Twickenham by the use of rice.

In 1830 damaged rice was in Ireland, and the second house attacked with cholera in the county of Galway, was one in which the noxious rice was present, and wherein it had been used for food.

In Nov. 1833, a woman, named Welldon, died shortly after eating a meal of rice at Limehouse, according to her own statement as contained in Mr. Barnett's letter published in *THE LANCET*. This case alone is sufficient to excite the whole of our medical Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba. For it did not occur at Jessore, Allahabad, the Mauritius, Batavia, or Canton, but in the metropolis of the British empire, and is recorded in the pages of *THE LANCET*, uncontroverted by any man. May I then express my full conviction, that a sufficient case has at last been established, to attract the attention of the British legislature to the important facts which are proved to affect the health of the community of the British islands, by means of the vast importation, in free traders, of deleterious rice from the East Indies, and that among other subjects connected with the condition of British India, the means which ought to be adopted for improving and cleansing the rice lands of Bengal, will not pass unnoticed by the intelligent members of the present Parliament? I beg to remain yours very faithfully,

R. TYTLER, M.D.

London, January 20th, 1834.

THE LANCET.

London, Saturday, Jan. 25th, 1834.

If persons occupying high and important offices in the state could but be made to understand the value of impartial evidence in all matters of legislation, they would ever turn a deaf ear to the crafty whisperings of courtly and intriguing monopolisers and slanderers. In the common pursuits of life, if an individual constantly

appeal to secrecy as his shield while arguing on matters of general interest, the honesty of his purposes is immediately questioned by all persons who are acquainted with the ordinary causes of human action. If it be wrong, therefore, in unimportant matters to submit to the injunctions which secret contrivers would impose on our language and our conduct, how much more pregnant with danger is the adoption, by legislatures, of the closet recommendations of parties who dare not subject their propositions to the critical analysis of a public scrutiny!

These remarks are drawn from us by the recollection of the unfavourable impression which was made on the mind of the late Right Hon. GEORGE LAMB, the much-respected Under-Secretary of State, by the private representations on public matters made to that gentleman. Mr. LAMB, it will be remembered, brought forward in the House of Commons the Apothecaries-Act Amendment Bill. Hence his active interference in medical affairs soon rendered him an unsuspecting object of corporate intrigue. Mr. LAMB was beset daily by hosts of monopolists and their agents, and it was incessantly attempted, in private interviews, and at private conversations, to represent to him the dangers that would result from legislative interference in medical affairs,—to point out to him the admirable construction of the existing laws,—the flourishing state of the profession, as compared with that of former periods,—to impress on him that medical corporators govern their institutions with the most virtuous disinterestedness,—and to convince him, in short, that the least change in medical law might lead to a great augmentation of existing evils. Or if any alteration at all were required, the emissary of the Apothecaries Company contended for an increase of power on the part of that worshipful body;—the President of the Col-