marily discharged "by order," and I shall therefore continue this plan until I am forbidden to do so. The Government, I ween, should be grateful to me for saving them the expense of sending these fifty-seven men out, and either bringing them back or burying them in India, and sending out their substitutes.

I am Sir, yours obediently,

Warley, Feb. 1859.

D. STEWART, M.D., *Depôt Surgeon.*

MEDICAL ASSISTANTS' MUTUAL REGISTRATION ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you kindly insert the following address to the medical profession in your journal?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
9, Hill-road, St. John's-wood, N.W. MARTIN H. IRVING.

GENTLEMEN,—The necessity of an established and substantial means of communication between medical men and assistants has long been acknowledged by all branches of the medical profession; but hitherto, although frequently discussed in the medical press, it has never been accomplished.

A Society, which has in view the above objects, is now about to be established. Amongst the advantages that would accrue to medical men from such a Society, are the following—viz.:

1st. The keeping a complete list of all medical assistants.
2nd. The registering their qualifications (if any) and previous appointments.

3rd. The taking care that all assistants registered produce certificates of character before their names are placed on the register.

4th. The saving of all trouble to the employer by the Society making all inquiries respecting assistants obtaining situations through its means.

5th. The immediate supply to his requirements which a medical man will meet with from the large number of assistants that would be registered.

To medical assistants, the Society would offer these advantages—viz.:

1st. The prompt attention that would be paid to their requirements.

2nd. The ready means of communication offered them through this Society between principals and themselves.

3rd. The great care that will be exercised by the Society in providing suitable situations for them.

4th. The Society being made the means of communication between all members of the medical profession, must be the means of placing assistants in a better position than they hold at present.

5th. The keeping a register of all medical men who are members of the Society.

6th. Their being enabled to obtain situations without coming to London, at no further trouble than application to the Society, by post or otherwise, always provided that the Society consider inquiries satisfactory.

To carry out this, it is proposed that an annual subscription of 7s. 6d. from medical men and assistants individually shall constitute them members of the Association. A fee of 1s. will be charged for registration. The payment of £2 2s. in advance will constitute a life member.

The Committee propose, so soon as the Society is established, to found a sinking fund, for providing assistants with help during sickness, lack of employment, &c.: of this due notice will be given.

The Society will consist of a president, vice-president, committee, manager, and secretary. Subscriptions and donations may, for the present, be forwarded to the Manager at the above address. Post-office orders payable at the General Post-Office, London, to M. H. Irving.

It only remains for me to beg medical men and assistants to at once become members of the Association, thereby enabling it immediately to commence its sphere of usefulness, and to allow its influence to be felt amongst all bodies of the medical profession.

I need hardly remind the richer members of the profession that they can materially aid the Society by donations, thereby affording a helping hand to those who are now endeavouring to ameliorate the condition of assistants, and to draw a closer bond of union and sympathy between employers and employed.

I am, Gentlemen, yours very respectfully,

Feb. 1859.

MARTIN H. IRVING.

DEATH OF THE DISCOVERER OF THE FOOT-PRINTS OF BIRDS IN THE NEW RED SANDSTONE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—When recently looking over some of the American journals, in the library of the College of Surgeons, I came across the announcement of the death of Dr. James Deane, of Greenfield, Massachusetts, on the 2nd of June, 1858. This gentleman's name is well known in this country as the first person who discovered the foot-prints of birds in the new red sandstone of the Connecticut valley; and I feel sure that the news of his demise, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six, will be read with regret by many members of our profession, and by men of science. It may be truly said, that science has lost in him one of her most able votaries, and our profession a distinguished ornament.

The frequenters of the British Museum, but especially students in geology and comparative anatomy, will remember seeing a slab of sandstone (eight feet by six) in Room I. of the northern gallery of Organic Remains, which is covered with ornithicnites, or impressions of numerous foot-prints of birds, belonging to some ten or twelve individuals of different sizes. This slab was discovered by Dr. Deane, at Turner's Falls, Massachusetts, and was purchased from him by the late Dr. Mantell for the trustees of the British Museum, and added to the collection in 1844. There are two other and smaller slabs of not less importance.

These interesting discoveries of Dr. Deane are noticed in all English works on Geology, and will for ever connect his name with foot-marks of birds in the new red sandstone formation. A large work upon this very interesting subject was in course of preparation by him when his career was suddenly cut short by severe illness. Several papers and memoirs from his pen, copiously illustrated, on the same subject, have already appeared in the leading American journals of science. For copies of several of these I am indebted to the kindness of their author. Although personally unacquainted with Dr. Deane, it has been my privilege to correspond with him on the subject of the impressions which go by the name of Ornithicnites, and also of those supposed to have been made by extinct Crustaceans in the Potsdam sandstone of Canada, which are known as Protichnites. He took a lively interest in the discovery of the latter, which at first were erroneously supposed to be tortoise impressions.

Although best known as a scientific man, he is said to have been highly accomplished in medical acquirements, and very skilful as a surgeon. His well-known modesty, and somewhat retiring habits, kept him from assuming that prominence to which his varied knowledge and many talents entitled him.

I think it a duty to make known, in the pages of your journal, the loss which our profession has sustained; and it is not improbable that many of your readers were personally acquainted with this estimable man.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Portman-street, Portman-square, Feb. 1859. GEORGE D. GIBB, M.D.

THE LUNACY LAWS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Amongst the "notices of motions and orders of the day" for last week for the House of Commons, I observe a notice as follows:—"Mr. Secretary Walpole, two Bills for amending the Laws relating to Lunatics in County and Private Asylums."

Such Bills, Sir, should be watched with extreme care by the members of the medical profession; indeed, now that we have a government expressly for the profession, no Bills of such a nature as those of which notice has been given should be put forth without the concurrence and sanction of the governing body representing the profession.

For myself, I beg to say that I have reason to think that any Bill that may be inspired by the Lunacy Commissioners themselves—and I suppose Mr. Secretary Walpole's Bills to be such Bills—is not likely to be based on broad and comprehensive principles in a medical point of view, as it must emanate from these medical men only, not calculated by their antecedents to regard the subject on broad and comprehensive principles apart from their own peculiar views and crochets, and men certainly not competent to dictate to the whole profession what shall be the precise medical treatment and management of the lunatics throughout this kingdom.

February, 1859.

I remain, Sir,
YOUR CONSTANT READER.