CONSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT OF LOCAL DISEASES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The discovery that lithia, quinine, and many other substances can be traced in the various structures of the body, especially in those regarded as extra-vascular (?), as the crystalline lens, has a very interesting relation to medical surgery, first insisted on, under the name of the "Constitutional Treatment of Local Diseases," by my old and revered master, Abernethy. Since his time the subject, so far as I know, has not been prosecuted in any way worthy of its importance, except, perhaps, by a very few of his pupils, who have, amidst a kind of conventional incredulity, seldom spoken with much authority.

The interesting lecture given last night at the Royal Institution by Dr. Bence Jones induces me to send you a short notice of two cases of cataract, in which the opaque lens became clear under treatment directed to the general health. The first case was that of a man about forty years of age, by occupation a house-painter. As it is some years since, I forget the quantity of rum he had been in the habit of drinking daily, but I know that the quantity must have been enormous by the vibrating condition of his whole muscular system, and by my beginning my attempt to wean him from the habit by allowing a pint daily. He applied to be operated on for cataract; but besides that he was not in a state justifying an operation, his symptoms were complicated with those of amaurosis. I told him that no operation would be of service to him unless he could be relieved from certain symptoms not referable to the cataract. As he seemed determined to do his best, I took him under care, and after some time the symptoms of amaurosis were removed. He was in greatly improved health, and had so entirely relinquished spirit-drinking that he said nothing would again induce him to take any more as long as he lived. On looking at the eyes with a view to the removal of the cataracts by extraction, it appeared to me that the lenses were somewhat less opaque, and on testing the degree of improvement in his vision it seemed to me to exhibit a corresponding shade of improvement. On this I told him he had better persevere in his present treatment, which he did with perfect success, the lenses becoming clear and with the return of distinct vision.

About two years ago I met with a similar case in the wife of a publican, but who was a very temperate woman. In her case the treatment for the correction of the various functions (somewhat too vaguely called the general health) was longer than usual from the same complication—viz., that of amaurotic symptoms with the opacity of the lens; and with the same result—viz., the restoration of the transparency of the lens.

I could give you many examples illustrative of how little is generally done as compared with that which may be accomplished by more enlarged views of medical surgery, but as I hope to publish early next year a digest of the principles which I advocate, and which I shall show to be a more perfect development of those intelligibly deducible from Abernethy, I will not trouble you with more at present, but remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Albany Court-yard, March 24th, 1866.

GEORGE MACILWAIN.

THE VACCINATION BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have to apologise for troubling you again so soon, but as no time must be lost I think you will excuse me.

I now beg to hand you a copy of a letter addressed to the following members of Parliament on the subject of the "Vaccination Bill," drawing their attention to the inadequacy of the fees proposed; and I am happy to say that I have received favourable replies from the whole.

The letter has been forwarded to Sir Francis Crossley, Bart., M.P.; James Stansfeld, Esq., Jun., M.P.; Henry Edwards, Esq., M.P.; Samuel Waterhouse, Esq., M.P.; and Edward Akroyd, Esq., M.P., to all of whom I am well known.

I trust every Poor-law medical officer, as well as every private practitioner, will communicate at once with some member of Parliament, or another injustice will speedily be enacted. Two shillings and sixpence per head have been

willingly paid in this district for the vaccination of cattle, and surely human beings, to every sensible mind, are as valuable and require even more attention than the beasts of the field. Some will doubt this, but not the enlightened framers of a "Vaccination Bill," I should hope.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Cheapside, Halifax, April 7th, 1866.

FREDK. S. GARLICK.

[COPY.]

5, Cheapside, Halifax, March 21st, 1866.

DEAR SIR,—A Bill has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Bruce and Mr. Baring, entitled "A Bill to consolidate and amend the Statutes relating to Vaccination in England."

The fee of one shilling and sixpence for the successful vaccination of a child is too little, inasmuch as the child has to be inspected on the eighth day and the necessary certificates filled up. The lowest fee, in my opinion, should be *two shillings and sixpence*.

I have been a public vaccinator now for nearly nineteen years, and therefore I think you will permit me not only to express an opinion, but to hope that you will agree with me that the fee I mention will not be excessive for the time, attention, and skill which are necessary for carrying out vaccination successfully.

I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

Your obedient servant,

FREDK. S. GARLICK.

As a summary, I think the following propositions might safely be submitted to the Right Hon. H. A. Bruce, Vice-President of the Privy Council, with reference to the Bill now before the House of Commons on vaccination.

1. In order that vaccination may be systematically and efficiently carried out, it is only fair to expect that the medical practitioners who discharge the duty should be reasonably and efficiently paid for their services. Unless this is done the Act will, in my opinion, fail, as the preceding Acts have failed; solely because the fees proposed are inadequate. A medical man in ordinary practice does not think it worth his while to vaccinate unless he finds it remunerative, and, to make it so, constant attention must be given to it, without fail, week by week. A supply of lymph must be carefully preserved and constantly at hand, otherwise there will be nothing but delay and disappointment.

2. On this account I think the lowest fee that will prove really remunerative for the time, skill, attention, and responsibility involved, together with the necessary certificates required by the proposed Act, should be two shillings and sixpence for each case residing within a radius of two miles of the medical practitioner's residence, and three shillings and sixpence beyond that distance.

3. That the successful revaccination of any person should be paid for in the same way as primary vaccination, seeing that the trouble and responsibility in both instances are the same.

4. That the necessary certificates required by the Act should be simplified as much as possible, so as to save the medical practitioner's time.

5. That a public prosecutor should be appointed in every district, on whom should devolve the carrying out of the penal clause in the proposed Act. Unless this is done the Act will be constantly evaded, as hitherto, by large numbers. Nothing has a more injurious effect on the public mind than an Act of Parliament, passed it is presumed for the benefit of all, without any provision for its being administered faithfully, energetically, without fear or favour, and in strict accordance with the written word.

CHARTERHOUSE AND ITS REGISTRAR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me to offer a few words of comment on the incompleteness of the arrangements made on the occasion of the late election to the post of resident medical officer at the Charterhouse, in means not being adopted by the registrar to inform all the candidates *by letter* of the date of the election?

It seems that an advertisement in certain of the daily newspapers was considered sufficient announcement of the event. Did it not occur to the registrar that some of the candidates might possibly, and even probably, never see either of the journals in which the advertisement appeared? That such a contingency *could* and *did* occur, I am, unhappily, able to demonstrate in my own person.

Being a candidate for the office resigned by Dr. Miles, I sent in an application and twenty original testimonials (including five specially given me for the occasion) to the registrar of Charterhouse as long ago as January 29th, having on the 13th of the same month forwarded printed copies of testimonials, accompanied by an autograph letter, to each governor. Not receiving any communication from the Charterhouse authorities, I concluded that a certain number only of the candidates had been selected from those applying, and that I was not placed among the favoured few from whom the final selection would be made by the governors; I therefore gave no further heed to the matter.

Judge then, Sir, of my surprise when I was informed, a week after the election had come off, that seventeen of the candidates (i.e. all except myself) attended at the Charterhouse on the 14th inst., and further, that my name was called in due order with those of other candidates.

The sole reason of my absence from the meeting on the day of election was my ignorance of the particular date fixed for the event to be decided. I did not see any of the daily newspapers on the 9th and 10th inst., on one of which days, I am informed, the announcement of the meeting was advertised; and no advertisement appeared in *THE LANCET*, the more legitimate channel of information in medical circles. The most satisfactory method of proceeding, however, would have been for the registrar to have sent a separate notice of attendance to each candidate. Had such a course been adopted the *contretemps* that I have now to deplore would not have occurred, as I could most readily have attended on the day that happened to be chosen for the election. I feel the disappointment of not having had the opportunity afforded me of a personal interview with the governors (two-thirds of whom had previously received recommendatory letters on my behalf) quite as much as the unsuccessful issue of my application for the vacant post, which latter I desired chiefly on account of the daily association with scholars and gentlemen its tenure would have involved.

Trusting that the remarks I have ventured to make through your columns may be of some use, if but little, in the ordering of future elections, whether of medical or other officers, at the Charterhouse,

I remain, Sir, yours very respectfully,
St. Martin's-le-Grand, March, 1866. EDMUND LLOYD.

THE LLANGFNI CASE.

To the Editor of *THE LANCET*.

SIR,—Being concerned in the above case, and having seen my name introduced in the last number of *THE LANCET*, I deem it but right to the profession to state what my evidence was at the adjourned inquest, and that briefly. On the 13th ult. I went, in company with Mr. Williams, an old gentleman of considerable experience in midwifery, to the house of the young woman supposed to have given birth to a child a few days before; in the presence of the mother and Mr. Williams I made a hand and eye examination of a young woman of *light complexion*. I first examined the vagina. I had an easy access to the mouth of the uterus; it was perfectly soft and smooth, the os uteri dilating freely on the introduction of the index finger, so much so that I could have introduced more. There was a discharge of lochia, and the upper surface of her chemise was stained with the same. The breasts were distended with milk; the nipples of dark colour, such as we invariably find in parturient women. Mr. Williams extracted milk from the left breast, and myself from the right; there was abundance of it. With all the detailed symptoms, I gave my opinion at the coroner's court that she had been recently delivered.

I saw her on the 19th, and in my opinion she was suffering from milk fever. I examined her breasts, and the slightest manipulation caused the milk to flow freely, thus confirming the opinion I gave at the coroner's inquest.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
RICHARD THOMAS.

Westbury Mount, Menai Bridge, April 10th, 1866.

THE Empress of the French lately went over and inspected the establishment for convalescents at Vincennes, founded by the Emperor, which luxuriously accommodates 500 invalids. *The Empress* directed MM. Perdonnat, Beboul, and Margantin to organize a series of lectures to be delivered for the instruction and entertainment of the convalescents.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

APRIL 9TH.

THE PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT-SURGEONS IN THE GUARDS.

The Marquis of HARTINGTON said, in reply to Mr. O'Beirne, that up to the time of the warrant in 1858 the system of promotion in the Guards was, no doubt, a regimental system; but in that year a warrant was issued which conferred several advantages, as to pay and rank, on the medical department, and that warrant also recommended that the mode of promotion, as a general rule, for the rank of assistant-surgeons should in future be by seniority in the service. In 1860 the question arose in regard to the surgeons of the household cavalry, whether the provisions of the warrant would apply to that branch of the service, and it was decided by her Majesty, on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief to the Secretary of State for War, that in the household cavalry and in the Guards also, in consideration of the surgeons having accepted the warrant, they should enjoy the advantages it conferred upon them.

THE CATTLE PLAGUE ACT.

Sir G. GREY said, in reply to Mr. C. Read, the provisions of this Act had been merely temporary, but an order in council had been passed to continue those provisions with regard to the slaughtering of animals and the payment of compensation to the 10th of May.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES BILL.

On the motion of Lord C. PAGET, the following members were nominated the select committee on this Bill:—Lord Clarence Paget, Sir John Pakington, Mr. Walpole, Mr. Hunt, Lord Hotham, Sir James Fergusson, General Peel, Sir Harry Verney, Admiral Erskine, Sir Morton Peto, Mr. Ayrton, Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Locke, Marquis of Hartington, Sir George Grey, Colonel Herbert, and Mr. Morley.

APRIL 10TH.

MORTALITY OF TROOPS IN CHINA.

On the motion of Colonel NORTH, the following gentlemen were appointed a select committee on the mortality of troops in China:—Colonel North, the Marquis of Hartington, Lord Hotham, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Adderley, Lord F. Cavendish, Mr. Roebuck, Colonel P. Herbert, Mr. Dalglish, Lord H. Percy, Mr. Calthorpe, Major Anson, Lord J. Hay, Mr. Trevelyan, and Major O'Reilly.

PROMOTION OF SURGEONS IN THE GUARDS.

Sir R. ANSTRUTHER gave notice that on the 16th of May he should call the attention of the House to the proposed alterations in the system of promotion amongst the medical officers in the brigade of Guards, and that he should move for a copy of the Warrant or Order of 1860, under which the alteration was made.

APRIL 11TH.

The Cattle Contagious Diseases Bill and the Labouring Classes Dwellings Bill were read a third time and passed.

VACCINATION BILL.

Mr. H. BRUCE, in moving that the House should go into committee on this Bill, explained that its object was the consolidation of the existing Acts relating to vaccination, and the introduction of certain amendments in the law for the purpose of establishing an efficient system of vaccination throughout the country.

Mr. HENLEY and Sir R. PEEL having pointed out the numerous defects in the Bill,

Mr. H. LEWIS said the defects were too many and serious to be dealt with in committee of the whole House, and moved that it be referred to a select committee.

This was seconded by Sir J. JERVOISE, and supported by Lord Henley, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Barrow, Mr. Ayrton, Colonel North, Sir R. Peel, and others.

Mr. BRUCE consented to refer the Bill to a select committee, but upon the express understanding that the committee were not to interfere with the principle of the measure, which was the establishment of a compulsory and efficient system of vaccination.

The Bill was then ordered to be referred to a select committee accordingly.