tany. Mr. J. Stephens, 108, Ratcliffe Highway, agent to Dr. Coffin, visits patients at all hours. Fees, which include medicines, 2s. 6d., 5s., and 10s., according to distance and services required. N.B. The poor are supplied with cholera medicine and advice gratuitously. Contributions are solicited for that purpose."

On the part of the defendant it was urged that he did not pretend to be an apothecary, and that the patients who had called him in knew perfectly well that he was not a qualified medical man; that under these circumstances he had not incurred the penalty, which was intended only to be imposed upon those who held themselves out as apothecaries, which the defendant had not done; that if the defendant was held liable to a penalty in the present case, the public would be deprived of the service of persons who, although not qualified medical men, may yet be in possession of remedies which might benefit the sick, and that many persons of sound judgment were in the habit of resorting to such persons for advice.

The learned judge told the jury that the structure and functions of the human frame were such that its disorders could only be safely treated by those who had long and carefully studied the subject; that it mattered comparatively little, perhaps, to the jury and himself whether grocers and other ignorant persons were permitted to attend the sick, because they (the jury and the learned Judge) would take care in sickness to call in a well-qualified medical attendant, but that it was of the utmost importance that their poorer neighbours should be protected from the practice of uneducated men; there could be no doubt that great mischief resulted from the practice of such persons; that it was not pretended that the defendant was legally qualified to practise; it was said, however, that he had not held himself out as an apothecary, and that he was not therefore liable to the penalty; but it had been satisfactorily proved that he had *acted* as an apothecary, and that was the evil which the legislature intended to prevent. It was perfectly immaterial whether he had held himself out as an apothecary or not. If the jury believed the evidence, their verdict must be for the plaintiffs.

The jury at once found a verdict for the penalty claimed.

* * Mr. FIG looked quite "dried up" when he departed from the court.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE ANTI-LANCET CONSPIRACY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Gay's drama draws towards its close; the intricacies of the plot are in the course of unravelment, and the *dénouement* is near at hand. Is it possible that any unprejudiced and impartial persons remain still unconvinced of the atrocity of the fraud which has been palmed upon them? Are any persons to be found that still consider Mr. Gay a meek, innocent, and wronged man? Are not the public, as well as the medical profession, becoming every day more satisfied of the appalling fact that their ready sympathies have been traded upon, and their generous aspirations crushed and trampled down, by the base conduct of a small body of unprincipled partisans?

It has been proposed, Sir, by a contemporary, which assures us with a persuasive eloquence quite peculiar to its writers, that while it lavishes upon THE LANCET all the shallow abuse, all the pitiable slander, all the brainless declamation, and all the hostility that lies in its puny power,—yet while it has been doing this, its sole object, it need hardly say, "was the maintenance of the honour and independence of the medical profession." It has been proposed to enshrine Dr. Copland and the more prominent orators at the late Hanover-square meeting in a public memorial. It is said that the more conspicuous persons at the meeting "came there with a manly determination to despise abuse." But who the more prominent persons were, and the manner in which they carried out their *manly determination*, I have already sufficiently demonstrated. Well, there is no need at this moment to re-allude to the late west-end assemblage—a meeting composed of partisans, pupils, and scampish quacks, with a slight admixture of professional men; nor to the conduct of a person upon that occasion, who, not content with placing in the hands of the hon. secretary some of the most scandalous and gross misrepresentations that it has ever fallen to my lot to

read—misrepresentations that teemed with taunting insinuations against the moral character of gentlemen absent from the meeting—indulged his own over-strained and reckless vanity and self-conceit by actually asseverating that Dr. Copland had no power in the meeting, and, in fact, "had nothing to do with it."

Sir, what does the medical profession think of a man who publicly pledges his word to statements *which are proved to be false*? What does it think of a person who professes to summon an impartial meeting of gentlemen belonging to the medical profession, and yet makes *personal appeals* to a vast number, and entreats it as a "favour" that they will "kindly attend"? In what respect does it hold a man who threatens to *instruct the police to remove* the only gentleman belonging to the Royal Free Hospital committee that condescended to appear, and was prepared to answer the accusations which were so promptly urged against that body? With what consideration does it judge the man who blindly ignores the authority of the gentleman that presides over the supposed impartial gathering, and who distinctly and unblushingly avows "*that this is MY meeting; the chairman has nothing to do with it*"?

But, Sir, notwithstanding the unanswerable and pointed queries which I have just put, Mr. Gay no doubt still considers himself a suffering martyr. From the facts, however, to which I now wish to call attention, I fear that opinion will be confined to himself alone. Supported by a somewhat numerous, and, of course, zealous committee, backed by a noble, splendid and proud cause—I mean, Sir, the "assertion of a great public principle," for that is stated as the plausible reason and ground upon which some gentlemen have come forward—Mr. Gay has for the last few weeks had everything in his favour. The usual annual meeting of governors of the Royal Free Hospital was, as he well knew, appointed to take place on January 31st. Here was an opportunity to display his tactics—to prove his wrongs—to demand and obtain redress. What more could mortal man desire? Crowned with the laurels of a Catnach paper, flattered by the disinterested homage of its worthy coadjutor, and bespattered with the mighty praise of a daily writer, fresh from the laudations of his "great meeting"—a meeting, Sir, with which the presiding chairman "*had nothing to do*"—was not Mr. Gay in a most enviable position? What easier than to convince the united body of hospital governors that he had been grossly calumniated and grievously insulted? What simpler than to eject the existing managing committee, appoint a fresh one of his own selection, and contrive to obtain reinstatement in his vacated post?

Now, what has been the result of this important annual meeting? Why, that so far are the governors of the Royal Free Hospital—the gentlemen who have at their command the best means of judging as to the actual conduct of Mr. Gay, and the sufficiency or otherwise of the grounds that demanded his dismissal—so far are they from thinking that Mr. Gay is an injured man, that they all but unanimously passed a vote of thanks to the committee of the past year, in acknowledgment of their active and valuable services in upholding the best interests of the charity submitted to their charge. Only *seven* gentlemen out of a meeting composed, according to the official report, of *two hundred and thirty* were discovered to be inclined to dissent from this otherwise unanimous resolution.

Away then with the silly declamation, with the hired slander, with the pot-house rhetoric of hired scribes. Where's the foundation of all the vile accusations? Where the cause of all the clamour? What the origin of all the vituperation with which some journals have lately teemed? Mr. Gay's own statements have been more than once refuted, and his repeated asseverations are hardly received with implicit credence. His conduct, too, has been demonstrated to be that of a very vain, rash, hot-headed, hot-tempered person—a man who was determined to pursue his own course, however objectionable that might be, and to follow his own inclination, however head-strong, and impertinent, and unjust to his colleagues.

Yours, &c.,

Feb. 1854.

SPECTATOR.

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.

THE MEETING IN HANOVER-SQUARE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the reports of the meeting held on January 18th, a reference was made to me which demands the following explanation.

The Hunterian School of Medicine, with which I was connected last year, having been closed, I immediately endeavoured to promote the establishment of another. On surveying with that intention, the various hospitals of the metropolis, I observed that the Royal Free Hospital presented a most ample field for the investigation of disease, and that amongst such institutions it stood almost alone as one unconnected with a medical school.

Early last summer, therefore, I applied to the weekly board for permission to adopt the requisite measures for instituting a school of medicine and surgery in connexion with the Royal Free Hospital.

At that time I was personally unacquainted with every member of the committee of management, and also with the medical officers of the hospital. My application having been favourably entertained by the committee, the first medical officer whom I consulted on the subject was Mr. Gay, and I asked him if he would take part in the proposed school as one of the lecturers on surgery. His consent was readily and cordially given. A desire was thus unequivocally evinced by me of co-operating with that gentleman in the projected undertaking. Subsequently I became acquainted with the apparently irreconcilable differences between the committee of management and Mr. Gay, arising out of certain defamatory reflections on the character of the hospital, contained in a biographical memoir of him, then recently published. The committee maintained that any approval of such aspersions should have been *spontaneously* and unconditionally repudiated by Mr. Gay. He, however, made no such disavowal of any participation in those aspersions. Under such circumstances I naturally withdrew from further attempts at that time to connect an officer of the hospital with a school, the very formation of which depended on the acquiescence and support of the committee. Still, in the hope that a perfect reconciliation would be effected between the committee and Mr. Gay, no other gentleman was selected as his substitute. The place originally assigned to Mr. Gay was kept open for him by my co-partners, Dr. Marsden, Mr. Thomas Wakley, and myself, but the rupture between Mr. Gay and the Committee still continued. The opening of the school had long been announced for Saturday, the first day of October. June, July, August, passed away, and that day was at hand. It then became absolutely necessary to advertise the staff of lecturers. Further delay, therefore, in disposing of the position originally assigned to Mr. Gay was impossible. In September, and not until then, was a gentleman appointed to the chair that had been vacant for so protracted a period. I trust that this statement furnishes the most satisfactory proof possible that if Mr. Gay did not take a position in the school as one of the lecturers on surgery, it was caused by his own conduct, and not by that of my colleagues or of, Sir, your obedient servant,

FREDERICK JAMES GANT,
Lect. on Anat. and Physiology, Med. Coll.,
Royal Free Hospital.

Old Cavendish-street, Cavendish-square, Feb. 1854.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—When I read in the *Medical Times and Gazette* of the 21st ult., that “the principle” on which that journal “invariably” acted, was to give to every member of the profession a free and open opportunity of making a statement; and again, when I observe in the number of the 28th ult., letters from twelve or thirteen gentlemen assuming one view of a delicate question, I certainly had a right to expect that a short letter, addressed to the editor for insertion, taking different ground, would in common fairness have been allowed a place. But alas! despite its professions, “Audi alteram partem” is evidently not the motto of the *Medical Times and Gazette*, and I shall from this hour, as will many of my brethren, look upon that journal as the mere organ of a party, and consider that neither its reports nor editorial remarks can be depended upon for impartiality. I take the liberty of enclosing a copy of the letter alluded to, and if you deem it worthy of a place in THE LANCET, perhaps its perusal by double the number of readers who might have seen it in the *Medical Times*, will attain my object, which is that of truth and justice, with more certainty than had it appeared in the last-named periodical.

I remain, Sir, your most obedient servant,
King-street, Covent-garden, Feb. 7, 1853. GEORGE BEAMAN.

To the Editor of the *Medical Times and Gazette*.

SIR,—As an old member of the Royal College of Surgeons, (1822,) I take the liberty of addressing you. The temporary schism in our order, caused by the removal of Mr. Gay from

the Royal Free Hospital, must be known throughout the medical profession; but the proceedings and motives of the Committee and Governors of that institution have nothing to do with the purport of this communication.

It appears to me, that in the late speeches and correspondence, a main object with certain parties has been to injure the reputation of a rising surgeon, against whom, personally, there is no just ground of complaint. I allude to Mr. Thomas Wakley, (whose new and very successful mode of operating for the cure of strictures of the urethra deserves the commendation of every practitioner,) and when I assure you that prior to the December meeting of the Committee, that gentleman told me he should be the first to shake hands with Mr. Gay, if reinstated, I think you will allow it is acting vindictively and cruelly to a man, who, I believe, has never breathed an unkind expression towards any member of his own profession—who has never written one line derogatory to the character of a *confrère*, to treat him with abuse and contumely. I must ask, too, is it just? Is it candid? Is it honest? Is it becoming, I would inquire, for any jealous journalist to place a gentleman in the breach, and wound a just professional reputation, solely because the party happens to be the son of a rival editor? Such is my feeling, and the feeling of a vast majority of my brethren. I leave THE LANCET to fight its own battle—I leave the Committee and Governors of the Royal Free Hospital to fight theirs; but pray, as an impartial journalist, do not condemn the conduct of an able and aspiring member of our community without real ground of complaint.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
King-street, Covent-garden, Jan. 1854. GEORGE BEAMAN.

THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY.

[REPLY TO DR. T. L. BLUNDELL'S ASSERTIONS.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having been for sixteen years, and until I resigned office, one of the surgeons to the Royal Maternity Charity, I have not been an indifferent observer of the articles and letters which, since September last, have appeared in your journal on the affairs of that old and useful medical institution. I have long thought that the important suggestions you have made deserve the deliberate consideration of the governors, and are practicable, with great advantage to the poor, and to the respectability of the charity.

There has been so much personal vituperation and prejudice shown on the part of anonymous writers, among whom a well-known life-governor, and correspondent in THE LANCET, bears the palm, that I would not enter into the discussion. And when Dr. T. L. Blundell boldly and publicly denied your and Mr. Bamford's charge, of having offered to do the medical duties—“to supplant his colleagues”—for £100 a-year, I knew the chairman of the committee or Mr. Bamford could prove the gross inaccuracy of that denial. But now that, after three weeks' reflection, Dr. T. L. Blundell has changed his ground, has admitted the charge, but has excused his unprofessional conduct by the assumed *circumstances of the Charity on the resignation of the surgeons, which did not occur until five months after Dr. Blundell made the above proposal*, I can no longer forbear exposing the weakness of his plea, and attempting to vindicate the conduct of the surgeons to the charity, and of myself.

Allow me briefly to refer to the history of the Charity as affecting its medical staff. In 1834, in consequence of untoward occurrences, six or seven surgeons were appointed to act, in as many districts, in the absence of the physicians. As younger men, whose services were expected to be rarely required, these appointments were unpaid, while the consulting and three other physicians received unitedly £240 per annum. In a few years, however, the committee presented the surgeons with delivery-tickets for the poor, and invitations to the dinners of the Charity, which together cost them about £100 a-year.

From the Reports of the secretary to the Charity, it appeared that, in 1845 and 1846, the physicians attended about 140 and the surgeons 450 patients of the Charity. In 1849, 1850, and 1851, the committee reported, that the three physicians attended annually somewhat less than forty patients (of which Dr. Ramsbotham alone attended much the greater number, as his district embraced two-thirds of the entire field of the charity), and that the surgeons attended nearly 150 cases—almost four times as many,—of equal responsibility and importance. Some of the eighteen district surgeons attended few or no cases—others many cases, for which they received no remuneration; while the physicians received £60 each per annum.