in the navy—no unimportant element in the assistant surgeon's controversy.

I deem this branch of the question to be of paramount importance, because, as in commodities on shore, so on board ship, the good feeling that should exist between two members of the same profession tends greatly to uphold its dignity and to disarm opprobrium. It will, then, be heard with regret, and I may add with indignation, by the profession generally, that, as the result of my individual experience, and that of vast numbers of assistant surgeons who have served either in naval hospitals or on board ship, it must be affirmed, that there is an unwarrantable amount of reserve, austerity, and even of offensive bearing displayed on the part of many senior medical officers towards their younger brethren; and which in some instances to this day far exceeds the comparatively pardonable hauteur and pomposity of a captain.

I believe no apology to be due for thus exposing this element of discord in the profession, and which, if continued, must militate to the disadvantage of the assistant surgeon in the present struggle for rank and consideration. I believe that a friendly and gentlemanly communion between an inspector, and deputy inspector, or a surgeon and his assistant, are quite compatible with the due observance of discipline, and proper performance of duty; and the existence of such a sympathetic and real bond of union, forms so pleasing a feature in all our civil hospitals, where the surgeon and his house-surgeon, aye, the humblest dresser, invariably exchange those courtesies which one gentleman has a right to demand from another.

It may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that in one of our largest naval hospitals, no intercourse whatever, except of the most formal and often disagreeable nature, takes place between the senior and junior medical officers; and I submit that such a relationship between members of one common profession, and not varying it may be in qualifications, is incompatible with respect or the efficient performance of duty. I urge this point with greater confidence, inasmuch as exceptions are to be met with to this system of oppression and annoyance, and I rejoice to add, that in the person of Dr. Evans, of the Marine Infirmary at Woolwich, such an harmonious combination of discipline and amiability exists, as to insure him all the deference and zeal of his junior associates in duty.

For some time, much difficulty was experienced in obtaining candidates for the navy, and it was hoped that the absolute want of assistant medical officers would compel the Board of Admiralty to redress their grievances; but, acting under a determined spirit of opposition to the remonstrances of the whole profession, and with the view of meeting the difficulty, and still withholding from the assistant surgeon his rights, they have reduced the standard of qualification, and have been so far successful, that the Irish schools have of late freely administered to the wants of the enlightened board.

With the view, however, of concealing the fact from the public and escaping the justly-felt reluctance of the Medical Director-General of the Navy to lower the standard of qualification for naval medical officers, these candidates, before their final installation, are now subjected to the more ostentatious examination of a board,—a medical inquisition of three,—and having satisfied the chandler-shop requirements of this irresponsible body, they are hastily drafted off to various ships, all ready for the supply.

Thus the examining board, instead of instituting an experimental test of professional qualifications, and thus securing for the service a competent class of men, have yielded to the pressure of the naval section of the Board of Admiralty, and prefer to sacrifice the professional status of the naval medical service rather than place the assistant-surgeon on that footing which would make the service popular with the well-informed medical student.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

AN ASSISTANT-SURGEON R.N. OF MORE
THAN THREE YEARS' STANDING.

Dec. 1853.

THE ROYAL MATERNITY CHARITY.

LETTER FROM DR. T. L. BLUNDELL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has been directed, within the past few days, to a letter in your journal of the 3rd inst., under the signature of "M.D." Your correspondent boldly asserts, that I have been "publicly charged by one of the managing committee of the Royal Maternity Charity, with having offered to supplant my colleagues for an increase of salary." Now, Sir, I as boldly and publicly deny this grave charge from my secret accuser.

The circumstances relating to the affair in question have been long since discussed, and satisfactorily explained, in and out of the committee, and I therefore must express my astonishment that any person professing a knowledge of the affairs of the charity should be ignorant of these facts.

It now only remains for me, having been for a period of twenty-five years attached to the charity, to say, that experience induces me to dissent entirely from the remarks of "M.D.," with regard to its appointed midwives—remarks which are certainly as erroneous as his statement respecting the remuneration of the physicians; both of which I should be justified in attributing to the pen of a non-professional writer. However this may be, I am not disposed, nor can I in fairness be required by my colleagues, or the public, to enter the list with an anonymous correspondent, on topics which are usually determined by the appointed managers of the affairs of the charity. The latter body can alone decide these points wherein "M.D." and others may find fair grounds of issue.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

THOMAS LEIGH BLUNDELL, M.D.

New Broad-street, Dec. 12, 1853.

* * Dr. T. L. Blundell does not appear to understand fully his position. He is not called upon to answer an "anonymous accuser." The charge, which we still think it incumbent upon him to answer, was openly made on two distinct occasions by Mr. Bamford, one of the committee of the charity. We refer Dr. Blundell to THE LANCET of October 1st and 22nd, when he will find that the charge against him is not brought forward anonymously.—ED. L.

Medical News.

THE SOCIETY OF ARTS AND THE GLOVER-CAIL SAFETY LAMP.—At the meeting of the Society of Arts, on the 7th inst., a paper was read by Dr. Glover, "On the Safety Lamp, and on a New Safety Lamp," the joint invention of himself and Mr. John Cail, of Newcastle-on-Tyne. Dr. Glover, in his paper, paid a just tribute to the late venerable and lamented Dr. Clanny, to whom he was the means of presenting a testimonial for his long and unrewarded services. Dr. Glover showed that Dr. Clanny was the first to originate the idea of the safety lamp, and that Sir H. Davy, before inventing the wire-gauze lamp, produced four others, all modifications of Dr. Clanny's; hence, without in the least impugning the merit of Sir H. Davy, Dr. Glover claimed for Dr. Clanny the merit of having been the originator of the plan of lighting mines with safety to the miner. After pointing out the now acknowledged defects of the Davy lamp, Dr. Glover described the new lamp, and quoted very strong opinions from the evidence laid before the Committee of the House of Commons, in the blue book just published, on the subject of mining accidents. It is satisfactory to find medical men everywhere identified with efforts to prevent and remove the causes of human suffering.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY COURT, DEC. 5, 1853.—APOTHECARIES' COMPANY v. HUSBANDS.—Before J. Francillon, Esq.—This was an action brought against the defendant Mr. James Husbands, of Huntley, Gloucestershire, to recover a penalty of £20, alleged to have been incurred by him for practising as an apothecary without the requisite certificate. Mr. Robinson (of the firm of Borlase and Robinson, solicitors of Mitcheldean) appeared for the plaintiffs, and Mr. Smallridge, solicitor, of Gloucester, appeared for the defendant, and pleaded "Not Guilty."

Mr. Smallridge said he had an objection, *in limine*, that as there were four distinct cases mentioned in the particulars, the plaintiffs ought to elect one case to proceed upon, and he cited, in support of the objection, "The Apothecaries' Company v. Burt," 19 *Law Journal*, 334.

Mr. Robinson contended that it was not incumbent upon him to do so, but that he was entitled to go into each of the cases separately. Only one penalty was sued for, and they could undoubtedly recover that in the County Court. He referred to the case of the "Apothecaries' Company v. Bentley," in which it was queried whether the party practising without a certificate incurred only one penalty in attending several patients, or whether a separate penalty was incurred for each case.

His Honour decided that the plaintiffs must elect upon