remedy in Spain. Other medicines may of course, be given with this "opiate and oleaginous" course, suitable to each particular case. Thus, where there is evident distension of stomach, with vomiting of acid matters, full doses of bi-carbonate of soda are indicated, and these should be given at once, as a preliminary measure. Oleaginous injections with laudanum, swathing the whole body in blankets steeped in oil; astringent pills of acetate of lead and opium; calomel (in scruple doses) with opium, are all useful adjuvants in the treatment. Opium, freely given, soothes irritation, and checks discharge; calomel, as above indicated, also soothes and equalizes the circulation (hence its utility in our Indian plague); astringents contract the mucous tissues; and an oleaginous envelope checks exudation from the sudoriferous ducts.

I have written very hastily, with but little regard to arrangement or language; but, as the idea may be useful, I would rather send it at once than delay it to dress up.

Yours very truly,

C. R. FRANCIS, M.B. Lond.,
Bengal Medical Service.

Nynce Täl, Dec. 17th, 1854.

THE "MARSDEN" TRIAL IN PARIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—At the request of many friends I am induced to ask the favour of the insertion of this note, in reference to the unfortunate case of a Dr. Marsden and his daughters, now under investigation in the Court of Assize, Paris, and a report of which has appeared in many of the English newspapers.

The said Dr. Marsden is no relative or connexion of mine, neither have I any knowledge either of him or of any of his family. I am not a widower, neither have I any daughters, and I believe I am the only one of the name in the medical profession in London.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MARSDEN.

Lincoln's-inn-fields, Feb. 1855.

SURGERY OF THE WAR.

IN continuing the history of the medical arrangements of the war, it is gratifying to find that almost all accounts agree that the month of MARCH finds the sanitary state of the British forces in camp much improved to what their condition was at the end of last year. The climate, as we expected, has got quite mild, and forms a very insignificant element in the disaster of battle and bombardment now daily threatening. Except at Scutari, where a bad kind of fever has broken out, which we had feared for some time, there is little this month of such a depressing nature as that we have gone through since December. While we are told of this great increase of fever, which we fear to call by its true name, plague, we are assured by other and better judges, perhaps, that it is only typhoid. Another medical correspondent, writing about the middle of February, from one of the hospital wards at Scutari, tells us, on the contrary, that the hospital there is now "twice as efficient as it was a month ago; the overcrowded wards and corridors are becoming gradually thinned, to the manifest advantage of both surgeons and patients. We are not without expectations of a large influx, however, of sick and wounded, and fever patients, as the French, who always anticipate great battles by surgical movements, are fast preparing 5000 new beds in their hospital. Medicines with us, however, are now promptly supplied from London—thanks to the authorities at home stirring up the medical purveyor." And he then goes on to give his opinion, that it is quite impossible to conduct large military hospitals, like Scutari, without an admixture of civil practitioners, as intended at Smyrna; but we fear the simple answer to this will be—How do the French do it? Even our terrible enemies the Russians, do not they teach us how to establish a medical military staff and hospitals? No organization can keep off plague. Sardinia has now a military hospital for 2000 beds at Pera. Every one who looks at the question with an unjaundiced eye must at once perceive the danger of divided responsibility. The Army Medical Department should be enabled to extend itself spontaneously, and not be crippled by a divided allegiance, otherwise our army surgeons must be ever in doubt and difficulty, and unfairly deprived of the chief stimulus in their arduous duties—viz., promotion in the medical service—like the often

quoted tent of the fairy Pari Banon, in the "Arabian Nights," Dr. A. Smith should carry his system in his hand in times of peace, but it should carry within it the machinery of extension, and spread abroad its wings to entire armies at the first blast of war. This, we believe, has been impossible, from the cheeseparing character of Parliament and the Horse Guards, now, happily, we learn, likely to be changed. We must either have our Army Medical Department complete, like that of France, Austria, or Sardinia, or incomplete, if crippled by the civil authorities, colleges, or other departments.

We have never despaired of our brave soldiers. We now find the effective force in the Crimea, in the middle of February, to be 26,000 men, exclusive of the large number of 5773 under medical care in the camp hospitals, and about twice this number sick and convalescent at Scutari—12,344; making—with supernumeraries (2632)—something in all like 45,000 men. The French general can, at any minute, bring 60,000 men (shall we say under the eye of the Emperor himself?) to attack Fort Malacoff. A new Turkish contingent of 20,000 troops, also in want of surgical assistants, has been organized. Heaven grant that we have not disasters enough in the future! A hundred British ships are again ready for the Baltic, with fifty ships of our allies—the French. The cholera, so very prevalent under Sir W. Burnett's medical command last year, (who, by the way, has resigned,) is, by some medical authorities, believed to have been of sporadic or local origin in the fleet; the Russian fleet having also suffered from various endemic affections of the same kind, which this year they have learned to avoid. It appears hopeless, however, to raise the condition of our navy surgeons in the eyes of the Admiralty; so we must be content, perhaps, with new cholera reports, and meaningless controversies, as to the occult nature of this fell disease.

In the Russian navy in the Baltic ports, even in March and April, ice continued in the ship holds. About the first week in May, as expected, the frozen bilge-water began to thaw, when the officers and men were almost universally attacked with cholera, typhus, diarrhoea, &c.; even the exhalations from the bottom of the ships producing bad ophthalmia. There is a curious coincidence between the attacks of cholera at opposite points of Europe. From the 9th to the 15th of July almost every one in the Russian fleet in the Baltic had been attacked by these diseases, though Sir Charles Napier was not aware of it; while on the night of the 16th of July, as we stated before, (THE LANCET, Jan. 6th, p. 24,) the crew of the ships in the Black Sea and in the fleet anchored off Varna or Baljik, both English and French, were also first attacked—disease, with its fell grasp, thus levelling all alike. We believe this point needs no further illustration except this, that the Russian surgeons all ascribed the disease to the thawing of ice and exhalations of bilge-water in the ships; and according as they got rid of the causes the effects ceased. We seem to have invoked Allah and the Prophet, and gone on shore amongst Turkish mosques and minarets for some supernatural agent, Sir W. Burnett not looking for any cause amongst his surgeons afloat, as not scientific enough. It seems to us that these scenes will be all acted over again this year. Surgeons in the Navy, it is said, are becoming scarce, and several of our poor Army fellows are sick. New arrangements have been made in the Admiralty. It will not answer to do away with the name "assistant," and replace it by the terms "first" and "second" surgeons, as suggested; the general position of the Navy medical officers must be upheld. Our ships should not be fitted out so early this year, nor manned by men who have not been acclimatized. The moral position and value of our Navy and Army surgeons should be the same, afloat or ashore; Parliament should make them one. Medical science is now second to no other as a liberal and humanizing study. We have never joined in the hue and cry against the Director-General of the Medical Department of the Army, for the simple reason that we knew he was doing his best. We blame the higher authorities. It appears, notwithstanding the obloquy thrown on Dr. A. Smith, that nobody has been more anxious for the motion for inquiry before Parliament. We have been told, on the best authority, that the Russians have 35,000 in hospital, and more than one French regiment has also been swept away by disease; we cannot expect, then, that Dr. A. Smith, working against unheard-of difficulties as regards the commissariat, can have been infallible.

We believe this is not a time for fault-finding. We may have at any moment new battles equal to Inkermann and Alma. Large supplies of medical necessities have, however, arrived at Balaklava and Scutari. The fever now raging at the latter has taken off seven medical men in one month, and is represented as the product of animal emanations, from the