"The form and position of the fleshy columns on the internal walls of the ventricle appear, indeed, especially adapted to produce this obliteration of their cavities during their contraction; and the completeness of the closure may often be observed, on making a transverse section of a heart shortly after death, in any case in which the contraction of the rigor mortis is very marked. In such a case, only a central fissure may be discernible to the eye, in the place of the cavity of each ventricle."

Now, supposing that in the case of Lord George Bentinck there was exhibited a most complete spasm of the heart, so that only the central fissures of the ventricles were just discernible, is it not more than probable, nay, even almost certain, in the absence of heart disease, that such was a post-mortem state and effect, consequent upon the rigor mortis?

Surely Mr. Squire Ward's duty to the coroner, the jury, the noble lord's family, and the profession, was to have given a detailed account of the actual state of the heart, the amount of contraction, the quantity of blood found in each ventricle, and especially the pathological condition of the valves, particularly the mitral and aortic valves. The state of these valves to a morbid anatomist, after observing the spasm, would have been the first object of research. But all that Mr. Ward saw or found was the heart covered with fat!

What was the state of the head? Did he really examine it below the pia mater? This is very doubtful.

Did he examine the texture of the lungs? Some few years ago Lord George suffered an attack of pleurisy, or pleuro-pneumonia. In a word, did he not die of pulmonary apoplexy? Whence came the blood in his mouth, and found upon the ground? All his friends here know, that ever since the attack, three years ago, he had been complaining of his chest.

All that can be learnt from Mr. Squire Ward is, "that every organ was congested." Is this possible? NON-MEDICUS.

NAVAL ASSISTANT-SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Knowing the interest you have in the advancement of our professional dignity, I beg to send you a few extracts of a letter received last week from a friend of mine, an assistant-surgeon in the Mediterranean fleet, by which your readers can judge of the feeling of dissatisfaction very naturally entertained towards the naval service by its junior medical officers.

"I have now been in her Majesty's ship —; have been on one of the best stations, and in the most interesting part of the world, for the last four years, yet I am not one bit more reconciled to this service. The more senior I grow, both in the service and in years, the more humiliated I feel at the position I occupy in life. When I consider my present position, and reflect upon the bright hopes which I indulged in when leading with you the happy life of a student, I almost curse the day I ever entered the navy. My habits, my disposition, my very nature, has changed. I was then full of hope—now, a disappointed, dissatisfied man, ashamed to state candidly to my friends at home the unmanly position this illiberal service compels me to occupy. Would to Heaven I could foresee some prospect of leaving it."

"Ex uno disce omnes"—

for the feelings of all the junior medical officers of her Majesty's navy are the same. Are they to be disregarded? The next session of Parliament will tell.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

Portsmouth, Dec. 1848.

J. D. C.

A REMEDY FOR DYSPEPSIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In answer to your correspondent, "A Country Surgeon," suffering from severe dyspepsia, I cannot refrain from giving my own experience. For three years I suffered from dyspepsia in an aggravated form, baffling every kind of medical treatment; it was suggested to me by an intelligent physician, practising homœopathically, to take small doses of tincture of nux vomica. I had not to take it long, before its beneficial effect was apparent; and from that time (three years ago) to the present, I have never suffered from dyspepsia. Having been a sufferer from it, I can sympathize with a fellow sufferer, and feel it a bounden duty to tell him of the remedy that has cured me and many others, to my own knowledge.

I remain, Sir, your very humble servant,

December, 1848.

A LONDON SURGEON.

PROPOSED MEMORIAL TO THE LATE MR. SAMUEL COOPER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As I believe that no one individual of the United Kingdom, who has entered our profession within the last thirty-five years, has not largely benefited by the works of the late Samuel Cooper, Esq., I venture to suggest that some memorial of gratitude, esteem, and regard, be raised by us. A very small subscription would suffice for this purpose, if a response equal to my expectations is made. If a committee were formed in London to promote this object, doubtless others would arise generally in the provinces. I would readily offer my services in the cause in this city. If my proposal meets your approval, perhaps you will advocate it by a few remarks of your own.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Bath, Dec. 1848.

P. BALLANTINE FERGUSON.

P.S.—Half-a-crown has been suggested as the amount of subscription, it being hoped that so small a sum would be cheerfully contributed by almost every member of the profession.

TURPENTINE IN CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have just read with great pleasure the case of cholera in your number of November 11th, successfully treated by oil of turpentine, under the superintendence of Richard Brown, Esq., of Cobham, Surrey; and having been in the constant habit of giving oil of turpentine as a specific in malignant cholera since the year 1833, and having published in the *London Medical and Surgical Journal*, of August 30, 1834, the result of one successful case, among some others which occurred in the preceding year (1833), in the recital of which I gave my reasons for administering that medicine, you may judge, therefore, of my gratification in finding that turpentine was by another, as well as myself, justly appreciated for its therapeutic efficacy. The dose I first gave, as stated in the case referred to, was two drachms in an ounce and a half of peppermint water, combined with tincture of opium. I have latterly given a larger dose, from three to four drachms, repeating it at such periods, and in such doses, as the urgency of the symptoms demanded. When called for in a hurry, I have not hesitated to give it in half a wine glass or more of water, in which case it has very rarely been returned from the stomach; indeed, I have known the turpentine retained when many simple diluents and effervescent medicines have been rejected.

I quite agree with Mr. Brown in his opinion as to the active principle of the medicine, and also the almost instantaneous effect it produces in relieving the spasm, and giving an impetus to the vital powers; and I am perfectly persuaded, from a long experience of its efficacy, that it ought to be considered a sheet-anchor in this most terrific malady.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

GEORGE SAWYER, M.R.C.S.E., &c.

A REVIEWER REVIEWED.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Believing you to be a vigilant protector of the interests of the profession, I think you will allow me to make the following few observations in your valuable paper.

When authors make erroneous statements, that reputation they stake on the nib of their pen they lose, their errors are corrected, the public is warned. But if authors ought to be careful in what they advance, how much more careful ought those to be who, setting themselves up as the acknowledged teachers of the profession, pronounce judgment on authors and lead the public! The responsibilities of reviewers are great, and they deserve to be brought to the bar of the profession, if, through ignorance or malice, they throw a slur on an author's assertions and on his reputation. These observations are suggested by a review in the *Medical Times* of November 25, on a "Memoranda of Poisons," lately published, by Dr. Tanner. The reviewer states, that "the most original (!) part of the volume is that where we are informed a solution of iodide of potassium, added to a small quantity of powdered sublimate, turns it of a bright scarlet."

If this assertion be original in Dr. Tanner's "Memoranda," it is equally original in the stately octavos of Taylor, Christison, Beck, and Guy, as may be seen by the following extracts:—

"A small quantity of the powder (corrosive sublimate) dropped into a white saucer, containing a solution of iodide of potassium, is turned of a bright scarlet colour."—*Taylor on Poisons*, p. 407.