was originally uncalled for on your part. I beg to repeat, that I never authorised Sir Robert Liston to make any offer to you of the description to which alone the communications betwixt Sir J. Craig and me relate, *nor do I believe that Sir Robert ever made any proposal of the nature referred to.* No candid person can come to the conclusion, that the present appointment has been carried through, *after fair and open competition (!)* The statement in the newspapers was obviously intended to induce the public to believe that this had been the case. In so far as I am concerned, that statement was entirely false."

Mr. Liston has lost his temper as well

as the chair, and, from what we have learned of his style of lecturing, it is not probable that the students will participate in those disadvantages under which he considers himself to be labouring.

When this vile system of bartering in the conducting of medical appointments will terminate we know not; but, disgraceful under all governments, its sanction by the present is especially repugnant to every feeling of propriety and fair dealing—is insulting to men of genius—and a foul mockery of those ministerial professions which hold out an honourable and profitable reward to acknowledged merit.

ORIGIN OF THE SELF-SUPPORTING DISPENSARIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following comparative statement of dates and extracts from my own and Mr. Yeatman's publications, I trust are sufficient to prove the incorrectness of the charges you have brought against me in your Journal of March 30, 1833. I should have replied instantly, but have had some difficulty in finding Mr. Yeatman's pamphlet.

October 16th, 1817.

Mr. Smith published and distributed 1200 prospectuses of an infirmary, with the following title:—

"Prospectus of an Establishment of the Nature of an Infirmary on a small Scale, and at a moderate Expense, at Southam, in the County of Warwick."

It concludes with the following "remarks," which I will thank you to insert on account of their practical character:—

"Remarks.—The sum of eighty pounds would be adequate to the establishment of the institution, and an annual income of the same amount fully sufficient for its support. The *primary expenses* would be the furnishing of three rooms in a small house, a vapour-bath, a galvanic trough, electric apparatus, some few instruments, &c.—The *annual expenses*—the rent of a small house, out-lodgings, medicine, and stationery. *It is presumed that parishes would allow the poor their subsistence*, and it is very probable that, where they had reaped the benefit of the institution, they would contribute something towards its expenses.—*Southam, Oct. 16, 1817.*"

March 6th, 1818.

Mr. Yeatman published three small tracts in one pamphlet with the following title:—

"Remarks on the Medical Care of Parochial Poor, with a few Observations on the Improvement of Poor-houses, and on the necessity of establishing Small Infirmarys in Populous Towns."

Of which the following is an extract:—

"Now, the proper means can only be found in the establishment of small infirmarys, where medicine, diet, good air, cleanliness, moral care, and strict observance of the directions laid down by surgeons, are combined for the cure of large bodies of the sick. Dispensaries are extremely useful in cities, where infirmarys are also founded; but as in country towns the poor cannot be attended at their own habitations, without being subjected to those numerous privations which retard the cure of their maladies, and grievously distress them; so the latter alone can supply their wants during sickness, or when labouring under the effects of bodily injury.

"It may be imagined, that although in cities and many country towns, infirmarys are absolutely necessary, this necessity is superseded in other places; but the important benefit of hospitals can only be dispensed, with a few exceptions, to the numerous poor residing in their immediate vicinity; besides this, every large town is capable of filling the wards of a small infirmary, and demands one proportionate to its population.

"It may be said, that an infirmary cannot be built and supported, unless it be made a city or county affair of. Such establishments, however, might be begun by renting a house or two, and providing for as many sick as a liberal subscription might support, relying on their immense utility for increased subscriptions and legacies, and donations, which, in a few years, would be found adequate to the erection and support of a small infirmary. Nor is it by any means improbable, that government, alive as it is to the interest of the poor, will lend a helping hand in building them. The great mass of the lower orders also, by very trifling subscriptions, may produce, in the aggregate, a sum of no small amount towards their annual support."

Nearly two years before my "remarks" were published, a few benevolent persons had paid rent at my request for several poor patients in Southam; and in 1818, I had an infirmary with fourteen beds full of patients under my care, which cost upwards of a thousand pounds; thus I had, both in theory and practice, anticipated his views, for I had begun by "renting" rooms, and without waiting for the time when the "*government would be alive to the interest of the poor.*" I had, although a young man, and almost a stranger in the county, relied on its "immense utility" for increased subscriptions and donations, and I have not been disappointed.

Government may in time be alive, and "lend a helping hand." In the interval, some of that fox-hunting, horse-racing portion of the community, which you, Mr. Editor (possibly, from a more intimate acquaintance with country matters than I can boast of), speak of as comprehending the country gentlemen, can testify from observation and experience of their "*immense utility*" in various parts of the kingdom.

It is therefore impossible that I can have acknowledged any obligation to Mr. Yeatman. I have been visited by many, very many strangers, who sought information on this subject; and whatever I may have said of Mr. Yeatman, if *privately*, was not said *secretly*, and I feel too strong in my own right intentions, and clear knowledge of this field of philanthropic inquiry, to fear any disclosure.

It is not my intention in this letter to descend into arguments or details respecting institutions, the good results of which I am witnessing, and am satisfied are doing "*immense*" good, notwithstanding the misrepresentation which prejudice or ignorance may allege against them.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

H. L. SMITH,
Surgeon, Southam.

April 21, 1833.

MR. GOOCH'S REJOINDER TO
MR. WHITLAW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me a small space to correct a few of the errors in Mr. Whitlaw's answer (No. 503, April 20th). In the first place, he says, "Mr. Gooch asserts, that until he brought it thence, it was unknown in this country." Now I never asserted or meant to insinuate any such thing, because, before my return from North America, the efficacy of the lobelia in spasmodic asthmas had been proclaimed

(I believe) in the Edinburgh Journal; and as I am neither a vender of medicines nor a private practitioner, my only object in procuring a small quantity of the plant, was to benefit some private friends. As to there being no such place as "Apothecaries Hall" in Boston, I am neither able to affirm or deny it, never having been in that city. I only know that my friend remarked to me, "As you wished me to procure a genuine specimen of the lobelia, I bought it at Apothecaries Hall, and therefore you may depend on it;" and I perfectly recollect that the envelop was impressed with the seals and stamped in red letters, "From Apothecaries Hall, Boston." Further this deponent knoweth not, nor careth. Had not Mr. Whitlaw, under the garb of philanthropy, attempted to puff his medicine, I should never have noticed his letter; and I think I am justified in saying this much, when you cut him short by—"The remainder of this letter is an advertisement.—ED. L." vide No. 495, page 692, LANCET, 23rd February last. Does not this imply, "Come, Mr. Whitlaw, *down with the dust*, if you want to advertise your medicine, and we will put it on the cover for you, but it won't do here." I am, Sir, yours,

J. GOOCH, Surgeon R. N.

23rd April, 1833.

HOSPITAL COCHIN, AND HOTEL DIEU, PARIS.

ATTEMPTS TO DEPRECIATE SIR CHARLES BELL'S DISCOVERIES.—GIRARD'S CASE. PRESSURE OF HYDATID CYSTS ON VARIOUS NERVES.*

A CASE has recently presented itself in one of the Parisian hospitals which confirms, in a very remarkable manner, the correctness of the views first put forward by Sir Charles Bell, on the physiology of a certain portion of the nervous system. It is curious to observe how the French endeavour, either, on the one hand, to claim for themselves the merit of Sir C. Bell's discoveries or, on the other, to

* Subsequent to our translation of the case drawn up by M. Montault, and published at page 105 of our last number, we received the present account of the same singular and highly interesting case from one of our reporters in the French capital, drawn up from his own observations and enquiries. The gentleman who has furnished it, is, however, so particularly competent to the physiological task he has undertaken, that we are unwilling to keep back his paper, even at the risk, in inserting amongst our hospital reports, of repeating the main facts which that of M. Montault contained. The additional authentication will not, we are sure, be regretted or complained of by our readers.—ED. L.