symptoms generally attendant on vermes. She has been treated for tania, but with no effect, though the sensations are not so violent as they were.

One evening, after the street lamps were lighted, she, her mother, and myself, were standing by the street door, and though the house is situated in a quiet neighbourhood, she imagined that she was walking near the *Elephant and Castle*, and said that she felt delighted at the sight of the coaches and other vehicles that were passing and repassing, making some remark on each succeeding *imaginary* object. At this time we were not moving from the threshold of the door, and the girl stood with her arms around her mother's waist; but she kept moving her feet, as if in the act of walking quick, which her physical strength would not permit. After labouring for about ten minutes under this delusion, she gradually,—by examining the objects around, as for instance, the railing in front, the houses on the opposite side of the street, and other objects well known to her,—discovered that she was still at home, and vented her disappointment by saying to me, "You always come home so soon, sir," or some such unmeaning expression.

In the early stages of her complaint she showed an invincible disposition for collecting or saving money—carefully laying aside all the silver and copper she could lay hold of, saying that it was for her mother. When desired to give or lend any portion of it, she evinced the greatest reluctance to do so. Notwithstanding this disposition, however, a few days after, on being reasoned with on the folly of such a propensity, she became as indifferent to money as she had before been anxious for it. After an interval of some weeks, passed with feelings of indifference about coin, she is again beginning to manifest the propensity,—wanting the money, she says, for a very particular purpose, the nature of which cannot be elicited from her.

She is much alarmed at her own shadow by candlelight, thinking that it is another person of her own sex, who continually follows her. At such times she exclaims, "I do not wish to go with you, ma'am;" "You always follow me, ma'am," or some other such sentence, and after advancing and receding in the part of the room where she observes the shadow, endeavouring to snatch at or seize it, she will retire to her chair, sink into it quite exhausted, and instantly, to all appearance, fall into a profound sleep, remaining in that state for three minutes, or a little more, and then suddenly start up and exclaim, "You always do, ma'am."

After her attention has been firmly engaged, either by her parents, or myself, we are enabled, with some considerable difficulty, to amuse and divert her, but then she will make use of such unmeaning expressions and phrases as would astonish and divert an unaccustomed auditor; though, after witnessing the whole scene, it cannot but call forth in feeling minds the greatest sympathy and commiseration, for who, after witnessing such a heart-rending scene, can turn away indifferent and heedless?

A belief exists in the minds of her parental guardians and myself, that those medical gentlemen who have seen and attended her, do not thoroughly comprehend her case. The variety of their opinions proves this; but not a doubt exists amongst them, that it is one of extraordinary nervous debility, or, more properly speaking, nervous disarrangement.

In conclusion, Sir, I beg to state that if any medical gentleman feels desirous of seeing this afflicted individual, by which means only a just appreciation of the unhappy case can be made, and will generously afford her the benefit of his gratuitous professional aid, a ready opportunity shall be afforded of doing so, and the eternal gratitude of her dearest friends will be excited by it. I shall, Sir, feel infinite confidence in your advice and assistance, as I well know that you are ever ready and willing to render aid to the afflicted. With your kind permission I shall confidentially leave my address with you, so that any communication may be communicated to me, when it shall be instantly attended to. Begging pardon for occupying so much of your valuable attention and space,

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ALFRED LAMBERT.

[Near London], April 14, 1834.

STONY COVERING OF THE SKIN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Conceiving that the following very extraordinary case may prove an object of interest to you and your readers, I am induced to submit it for publicity through the medium of your widely circulated and highly valuable Journal.

I have at present, under my care, a man who is nearly encrusted with a stone-like skin, very closely resembling the barnacles of the native oyster, or what is called "rough-casting," so frequently seen

on the outside of lath-and-plaster houses. This singular individual experiences no pain whatever from his affection, and the only inconvenience he suffers, arises from a sense of tightness and weight, accompanied by almost total want of sleep, as the recumbent position causes in him the sensation of lying upon a board thickly studded with nails, or, as he expresses it, "lying on a bag of sticks." The first appearance of this covering occurred about six months ago, since which time it has been rapidly increasing, and little doubt exists in my mind but that, in a short time, if left to itself, the man will become as thoroughly encased in a hard coat as the armadillo or the rhinoceros. I may add that he is rendered totally unable to provide for himself and family. The case being under my superintendence, I shall at all times have much pleasure in communicating on the subject with the scientific and humane. Allow me to subscribe myself yours, very respectfully,

GEO. KITCHING, Surg.

100, Aldersgate Street, April 18, 1834.

LUXFORD RURAL DISPENSARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Among the supporters of medical reform, I have yet heard no one protest against the practice of allowing medical officers in the government pay to settle in private practice. How is this? General practitioners, who are not pensioners, suffer greatly by the custom. I do not mean to deprecate the allowance of half-pay to our gray-headed medical veterans. God knows that in many instances they have earned what they receive dearly enough, but I object to the law which allows them to enter into open competition with the rest of the profession, with so decided an advantage. The ruin which, in some districts, has fallen upon medical practitioners, has been mainly owing to these gentlemen, whom, as a portion of the public, we are made partly to furnish with the very means that undo us. For the satisfaction of myself and a few medical neighbours I have taken the liberty of calling your attention to this subject, hoping that, if not already brought before the Parliamentary Committee, medical men will see the necessity of doing so immediately.

You and your readers must have had a dispensary surfeit of late, and must sicken at the very idea of "self-supporting dispensaries." But if more evidence is yet wanting of the mummerly, corrupt man-

agement, and mock charity of these institutions, or of the humiliating reproaches that sooner or later fall upon the medical men who are induced to countenance them, I beg to furnish the following facts on the subject.

One of these charities, under the name of the "Luxford Rural Dispensary," was established in this town about two years since, and two other practitioners with myself were appointed surgeons to it. The relief was meant to extend to the villages five miles around, and we had stated charges for visits and journeys to those patients who required home attendance. Those who could attend at the surgeon's house were prescribed for gratuitously. The medicines were dispensed by a druggist in the town, whose shop was called the dispensary. The Duke of Newcastle was the patron, and a whole posse of "reverends" were the vice-presidents; a portion of whom, with the treasurer, formed the committee. For the first year, the medical officers were also included in this committee; but their attendance was soon found inconvenient to the policy of the divines. It happened that a liberal-minded man was elected chairman to the body, but his views did not suit the narrow and partial principles of his brethren. He was consequently obliged to resign, and another was elected, under whose management a by-law was immediately passed to exclude the surgeons from the committee. Another followed which went to reduce the allowance for journeys, and thus insult after insult was heaped on the medical men at every meeting, while they were silenced into obedience by the fear of a sweeping opposition, which they were told the "patron" of the dispensary would exert all his energy to introduce, in case any refractoriness of spirit was shown. It was evident that such an institution could not stand long under any disguise. Accordingly towards the end of the first year it began to look wan and sickly, and many of its warmest supporters could already discover "something rotten" in it, silently determining to finish their connexion with it as soon as possible. Another half year passed on, and the poor thing grew worse. Still, however, it continued to linger on from month to month, as if unwilling to sink into total oblivion, like all vicious and depraved habits, clinging the more obstinately to life, in proportion as that life was less worth preserving.

The select clerical committee at last became alarmed for their offspring, and many consultations were held, while governors, whose forewarnings had hitherto been despised by this inflated body, were now pestered with letters, praying them to