A great deal has been said about the dictum of Mr. J. T. Pratt that the Society would not be a success unless it had two hundred members. Did the Registrar, or any member of the Association, imagine that that number would be enrolled in one year? Were the 2200 members of the Association, out of say 30,000 medical men, admitted in one, ten, or twenty years?—and I suppose we must consider the Association a success. It would have been sufficient to secure the stability of the Society; it had numbered 200, 200 years hence, when the funds might reasonably be expected to be required. All that would be necessary during the next five years to ensure success is, to keep down the working expenses of the Society; and then the institution could show signs of vigour, I have no hesitation in saying that there would be no lack of contributing members. I confess I am much annoyed to find that the directors should be so dizzled with the idea of driving away discontented members of the Association, who, right or wrong, had predetermined to demolish the Society. I consider the Society to be quite safe, and excellently organised—in fact, quite a model society. I believe no institution ever started under more favourable auspices, or during the past twelve months, or dating from its establishment, can boast of a greater success, than the Medical Provident Society of need should be so ruthlessly dashed from them in the manner in which it has been done.

My object in addressing you, Sir, is to enter my protest against the winding-up of the Society, and I hope the other contributing members will also strenuously object to this being carried out, if they could be induced, although the blow has been struck, to continue members of the Society, and try to double its numbers during the next year, the success of the Society would be secured beyond all doubt, as I could easily double the length of this communication did not warn me to pause, I could point out where the shoe does really pinch, and where it is its remedy. I will only say, in conclusion, that I am quite confident, with a moderate amount of energy and prudent management, the stability of the Society would in a few years be placed beyond the cavil of the most determined opponent.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
John Clay,
Vice-president of the Medical Provident Society.
Newhall-street, Birmingham, Aug. 1866.

MIXED ANÆSTHETICS.
To the Editor of THE LANCAST.

Sir,—I have, since my first experiments, out of which my "anæsthesia by mixed vapours" originated, made a very curious discovery, which in a remarkable manner confirms the deductions derived from those investigations.* As it has a practical as well as a theoretic value, I crave a little more of your space to make it known to your readers. In the experiments referred to it was found that the three anæsthetic fluids excreted over each other, when mixed in the fluid form, a certain property of mutual restraint, so far as their respective power of evaporation was concerned. This was displayed in a striking manner in their behaviour in the Torricelian vacuum. This is clearly due to certain physical attractions existing amongst them, and dependent probably to some degree upon their differing specific gravities, though not entirely so. Thus the addition of alcohol to ether restrains its volatility, just as, in fact, the addition of water to alcohol likewise holds its evaporation in check.

In order to abundantly prove in the same experiments, this influence is too feeble to equalise the evaporation of those mixed liquids to any practical purpose. And hence we so constantly hear of the inhalers charged with fluid "anæsthetic mixture" having to be charged, with the less volatile, the sponges &c. requiring to be constantly squeezed out and charged afresh.

It is, however, not the less an interesting fact that such influences have been there, and we can almost catch a glimpse of a field of physical research which would repay anyone who has the leisure to explore it.

* These are given at length in my work on "Safe Abolition of Pain in Labour."

The major cases of cases still occur at the north end, in and around the district where it originally commenced. Isolated cases happen in the southern and eastern parts of the town, but their proportion is so very small, as not to affect the general picture of the disease occurring in Scotland and Vauxhall wards, that the disease may be said still to have its chief seat in the latter districts.

The Ashfield-street sheds have been enlarged to accommodate 100 beds. They consisted primarily of two wards, the one for females, the other for males. This did not permit any separation of convalescent cases from those in the more severe stages of the disease, and the only plan was to keep the two classes of patients on opposite sides of the ward. Now the convalescents are at once removed into the new wards. There are three medical men attached to these sheds, each of whom takes eight hours' duty daily, so that a constant supervision is exercised. The treatment adopted is generally as follows:—A castor oil injection, repeated if it brings away any feculent matter; outward applications of mustard or turpentine, a hot bath, and the administration of a mixture of chloroform and aromatic spirits of ammonia. The induction of chloroform is also tried in many cases. In those instances where the vomiting having ceased, the suppression of urine continues, with a state of half-stupor and collapse, acetate of potass is given, and the bladder is washed out with warm water and camphor.

Since the opening of these sheds, on the 5th of this month, to the present time, August 29th, 166 patients have been admitted, of whom 79 have died, 57 have been discharged cured, and 30 remain. These numbers show quite as favourable a result as any others in which a different treatment has been adopted. There is no doubt that a great deal of the success is owing to the constant watchfulness on the part of the medical men and nurses of every patient, night and day.

At the Liverpool Workhouse Hospital 175 cholera patients have been admitted since the commencement of the outbreak, and of those 89 have died, 36 have been discharged cured.