ever, that the presence of nasal mucus, saliva, or pus will give rise to similar results. Should, however, no colour manifest itself after the successive employment of both the guaiac and the ozonised ether, the stain on the cloth or other substance is not due to the colouring matter of the blood. It will thus be seen that in any suspected case, in order to arrive at a definite conclusion in regard to the presence of blood, the expert should always in the very beginning divide the matter at his disposal into four parts, using the first in histological analysis, the second for spectral, the third for the production of crystals, and the fourth for Taylor's guaiac process.

THE GOLD COAST.

THE daily papers have contained such full accounts of all that has taken place in connexion with the Ashantee Expedition that our information has been in a very great measure forestalled. The doctors' and engineers' war appears to be progressing most favourably so far, and the tone that is now adopted in reference to the prospects of the campaign has undergone a complete change. It must not be forgotten, however, that the most difficult part of the expedition has just commenced. We have never shared the apprehensions that have been so generally entertained as to the health aspects of the campaign; on the contrary, we have always expressed the conviction that if the Expedition were carried out in the way and under the conditions which we have indicated, it need not be attended with any disastrous results, as far as the health of the troops is concerned. The main difficulty of the undertaking, which is only now beginning to be realised, is that of transport and commissariat beyond the Prah. The old maxim must never be forgotten, that an army "marches on its belly"; and the difficulty of feeding the European force on the march from the Prah to Coomassie will be very great. Large supplies of all kinds are present at Prahsu. Beyond that the force must advance very slowly and cautiously, "feeling" the enemy, as it is termed. By this time the invasion of the Ashantee territory beyond the Prah is a fact, and the news by the few next succeeding mails will be anticipated with great anxiety. That Coomassie will be taken we have no doubt, and if our reasonable expectations are to be fulfilled, the European force will have re-embarked and left the coast before April, when the advent of the rainy or unhealthy season may be expected. We are very glad to observe that the admirable arrangements on board the hospital-ship *Victor Emanuel* met with approbation at Sierra Leone, and we think the medical officers on board exercised a wise discretion in taking every precaution against the risk of infection from the shore. The shipping and invaliding arrangements appear to us excellent and adequate to the requirements of the service, and, as we understand, they have since been supplemented by additional transport vessels sent from this country, to meet the possible outbreak of yellow fever, and the consequent necessity for the rapid removal of all Europeans. The instructions promulgated by Sir Garnet Wolseley in his general order, as far as regards the sanitary precautions and suggestions which he has laid down, are very clear and practical. They embrace all the points on which we have so frequently dwelt. It is very reassuring to us to have our opinion confirmed by such undeniable authority, that the climate is much better and more pleasant in the interior than on the seashore; and, if ordinary precautions are taken, there is no reason why any of the troops should suffer in health during the few weeks that they may have to remain in the country.

SOCIETY FOR THE RELIEF OF WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF MEDICAL MEN.—At the quarterly court of directors, held on Jan. 14th, the president (Dr. Burrows) in the chair, £1266 10s. was distributed to fifty-eight widows and twenty-four children. The expenses of the quarter amounted to £57 18s. 3d. Fresh applications for assistance were received from two widows, and grants were made to them in accordance with the rules of the Society. Two new members were elected, and proposals of membership accepted from three candidates.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

MR. GAMGEE'S REPORT ON ANTISEPTIC SURGERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Scientific and professional controversies are so to become personal, to the common detriment of truth and friendship, that I shall say very few words on Professor Lister's note in your current issue. At my request, your printer sent him proofs of my two articles on the antiseptic system. The first proof was returned to me with several corrections, all of which I accepted and sent on to your printer, who faithfully incorporated them. The second proof (now before me, with covering envelope) was returned without a correction, and with this brief note:—"Nothing to suggest as to matters of fact. In great haste.—J. L."

In revising the second proof, the only material alteration I made, containing one of the passages objected to by Mr. Lister, was the following:—"In fact what is wanted is a thorough scientific examination of the whole question (the treatment of wounds), discarding the fatal bias of a fixed theoretical preoccupation, and only striving to collect, co-ordinate, and digest the facts on which alone a comprehensive and sound judgment can be pronounced." Is this bringing a personal charge, or affirming, in the broadest terms, a real want of cotemporary scientific surgery?

My second article (THE LANCET, Jan. 10th), concluded with a plea in extenuation for the freedom of unconventional, yet most kindly intentioned, utterance; and, having nothing to retract, I still rely on generous men accepting that plea in the spirit in which, as the whole context proves, it was proffered by.

Your obedient servant,

Birmingham, Jan. 17th, 1873.

SAMPSON GAMGEE.

CLOSING OF THE OUT-PATIENT DEPARTMENT OF THE GREAT NORTHERN HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Referring to your notice in THE LANCET of the 3rd instant relative to the closing of the out-patient department of this hospital, I beg leave herewith to enclose a copy of an announcement which is, by order of the Executive Committee, about to be inserted in the newspapers.

I would add that the committee, in taking the measure above referred to, have, to a great extent, been impelled to do so by the acknowledged abuse of medical out-patient relief as at present administered, and contemplate re-opening the closed departments with such rules as may at least in some measure remedy the evils attending the present system.

Requesting that you will favour me by inserting this letter in the next issue of your paper,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ALFRED PHILLIPS, Major, Secretary.

The Great Northern Hospital, Caledonian-road, N.,
January 16th, 1874.

GREAT NORTHERN HOSPITAL, CALEDONIAN-ROAD.

NOTICE.—Closing of the Out-patients' Department.—The Executive Committee hereby give notice that since the publication of their report for the official year ending June 30th, 1873, they have been compelled to close temporarily the greater portion of the out-patients' department of this hospital for the following reasons:—

(a) That the expenses of this hospital so seriously exceed the amount of annual subscriptions to be depended upon, that, having regard to the especial claims of the in-patients' wards, the proper maintenance of which they conceive to be their first duty, they consider, in the present state of the charity's finances, they would not be justified in keeping open the out-patients' department at the expense of being compelled to close one of the wards.

(b) They feel very strongly with those who consider that the out-patient department of hospitals, as conducted at present, is an absolute source of weakness to their efficient