

## Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

### POOR-LAW MEDICAL RELIEF.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me space to inform the Poor-law medical officers that the scheme for the administration of medical relief which I laid before the Select Committee of the House of Commons was published on the 15th of this month in "Knight's Official Advertiser," and can be procured at the office, 90, Fleet-street (price 2*d.* unstamped), by those gentlemen who desire to see it. The "Official Advertiser" is, I believe, regularly sent to the clerk of each union. The guardians, therefore, are by this time fully conversant with the propositions of the Association. I have carefully gone through the six volumes of evidence published by the Select Committee, and find in several of them important remarks on the subject of medical relief, which it is very desirable to collate and lay before the Select Committee and other members of the House of Commons in the form of a pamphlet; but as the Association is entirely without funds, it cannot be done. This I deeply regret, as I believe our cause has never been in a more promising condition than at the present moment, and might by a little judicious management, be brought to a successful issue. I am happy to say that the Council of the British Medical Association have determined to prepare a memorial on the subject of Poor-law medical relief for presentation to the Select Committee of the House of Commons. This will, doubtless, be an important aid to our cause, and a means of assisting the Select Committee in forming a right opinion.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Royal-terrace, Weymouth, Nov. 1861.

RICHARD GRIFFIN.

### "A SYSTEM OF SURGERY."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Purporting as this book does to give to the profession the best and latest information on surgery in all its branches,—each subject being entrusted, as I should imagine, to one better calculated than another to give it an able treatment,—I (and doubtless many others have done and will do the same) turned to its pages with the fullest assurance that I had only to seek and I should find.

Having a comparatively rare form of injury of the lower extremity—namely, rupture of the conjoined tendon of the extensor muscles of the leg, a third of an inch from the patella—under my care, never having seen the accident before, and not finding in my small circle of medical friends anyone who had, and there being but a passing mention made of it by Miller, and none in the "Vade Mecum," the only two works I was then able to refer to, I, as I have said before, thought I had only to go to the "System of Surgery" and there find all I wanted. To my great astonishment, rupture of this tendon, of the patella ligament, and of the Achilles tendon, do not receive the slightest notice from the author of the treatise on "Injuries of the Lower Extremity." Other deficiencies might be pointed out, but I forbear.

I may add that I treated the injury in the same way fracture of the patella is treated. Union has taken place, and my patient bids fair to have in time perfect use of the limb.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Stratford-on-Avon, Nov. 1861.

JOHN J. NASON, M.B. Lond.

### THE INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your journal of the 9th instant contains a letter from a brother medical officer, which very accurately describes the feelings of disappointment and mortification at present existing amongst the medical officers of the Indian army, in consequence of the non-recognition of their claims, to which they are entitled by a Royal Warrant published in India so far back as January, 1860. This Warrant, after specifying that there should be only four grades in the medical department of the Indian army, declares that "the relative rank attached to each grade shall carry with it all the advantages and precedence connected with the rank with which it corresponds in the army," but of which advantages, I regret to assert, we have been cruelly, and I may add, *illegally* deprived up to this date;

for the Warrant, although a gracious act on the part of her Majesty, is, nevertheless, one of the most legal documents to which her Majesty could have attached her signature, and which will be explained to Sir Charles Wood in the House of Commons at the commencement of the next Session, and by other members besides Mr. Bazley.

As an illustration of the *inequality* existing between the two Services, I will here mention that after eighteen years' service in India, I returned to this country on sick leave, and to my horror and dismay found my agents merely crediting me with a subaltern's allowance from the India Office, instead of captain's pay, to which I hold I am entitled; when at the same time, and in the same house in which I at present reside, I find a medical officer of the British army, also just returned from India on sick leave, and who entered the army some ten years after me, is receiving more than double my allowance. Surely, Sir, this is not the equality to which Sir Charles Wood twice alluded in the House of Commons in reply to Mr. Bazley's queries!

Another question put by Mr. Bazley, but omitted in the daily papers, was, "Why medical officers of the Indian army, who rank with captains, and receive only a subaltern's allowance, are expected to provide themselves with a return passage to India, when medical officers of the British army, drawing the proper pay of their rank, were furnished with a Government passage?" But to this, as to the other inquiries, the reply was, "The subject is under consideration."

As the Indian journals have been lately stating their belief that another Warrant would be shortly published in India, which would give a higher rate of retiring pensions to the seniors of the Service, and as several officers are "holding on" in consequence, I may here observe that they are likely to be disappointed, for on inquiring at the India Office last week, I was informed that no fresh Warrant had been dispatched to India; that the Governor-General had been merely called upon to furnish a report on the medical department, and nothing definite would be settled for some time.

With regard to amalgamation, I fear there will be nothing gained by that; for finding my subaltern's pay quite inadequate to meet my weekly expenditure, I solicited any kind of employment which would give me the same pay drawn by every medical officer of my standing in the British Service; but the reply was, "No opportunity for the employment of my services in this country." I mention this, as some medical officers, finding the climate of India too trying for their constitutions, fancy they will find employment at home by the amalgamation being effected. In addition to which, medical officers, who spend a quarter of a century in the tropics, with Asiatic cholera and Asiatic mutineers to contend with, surely deserve some higher rate of pay and pensions than those who spend a considerable portion of their time at home, or in our pleasant colonies.

Your correspondent, "Indicus," recommends Mr. Bazley to peruse the Bombay Medical Memorial. This he has already done, and being thoroughly aware of our grievances, will, I am sure, never cease to advocate our claims until he obtains redress.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, Nov. 1861.

A MADRASSEE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your correspondent, "Indicus," is sadly misinformed when he takes for granted that the medical officers of her Majesty's Regiments in India reap all the benefits of the Royal Warrant of 1858. So far from this being the case, our assistant-surgeons draw exactly the same amount of pay and allowances they did before the Warrant was published, thus gaining nothing by the recognition of the relative rank, the pay allowances attached to which are steadily denied them. *E.g.*, in England an assistant-surgeon draws the pay and allowances of a captain, provided he have six years' service. The same party goes to India with his regiment, and finds himself on the pay and allowances of a lieutenant, the justice of which is certainly not apparent to

Your obedient servant,

November, 1861.

BRITANNICUS.

### IDENTITY OF THE PARASITIC FUNGI.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the review of Dr. McCall Anderson's "Parasitic Affections of the Skin," published in your journal of the 9th inst., p. 449, attention was very properly directed to the omission of any discussion upon the most important matter now