

the strength with bark and acid, and feed well with solid meat, chopped with a small, hand sausage-machine, not forgetting wholesome malt liquor. By these simple means years of tolerable existence may be obtained, instead of months of miserable torture, the result of "high art" in surgery. You have so lately given space to an abstract of a paper I read at the Medical Society of London, upon the general subject of arrest of cancer, that I forbear to trespass upon your columns further, and remain,

Very obediently yours,

T. WEEDEN COOKE, M.R.C.S.,

Surgeon to the Royal Free and Cancer Hospitals.

Upper Berkeley-street, Portman-square, Aug. 1858.

## THE TREATMENT OF DYSENTERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Observing in THE LANCET of July 31st and August 14th an account given by Surgeon Docker, of the 2nd Battalion 7th Royal Fusiliers, of his successful treatment in cases of acute dysentery, at the Mauritius, by large doses of ipecacuanha, I felt much pleasure in noting the satisfactory results of the treatment; but it appears that ipecacuanha was not the only remedy employed.

While serving in Ceylon and China, I have had to treat the most severe cases of acute and chronic dysentery. Strange to say, at one time I was a great advocate for the combination of ipecacuanha with calomel and opium, and often ipecacuanha in large doses by itself; but I decidedly found ill results from the latter, and therefore relinquished it. The Mauritius is not far from Ceylon, but it may be a peculiarity of the former place that certain treatment may do good there, which, long before Mr. Docker tried it, I found useless in an adjoining tropical station. Nothing deteriorates sooner in tropical climates than ipecacuanha, though it may look apparently good; this I know from practical experience of the drug, which I have inspected in H.M. medical stores on foreign stations. My friend may overlook this, and attribute his success to a harmless powder.

I will tell him the result of my treatment in many cases of acute dysentery in tropical stations. If taken at the commencement of the disease, in less than twenty-four hours I have relieved my patient of all symptoms of acute disease; but treatment, though bold, must be judicious, or a fatal mistake will arise. A pulse that indicates acute inflammation must be altered quickly. Such is always an unmistakable sign in the acute disease. Let forty-eight hours pass over: we all know the then likely results of acute inflammation of the bowels. I have never feared to order blood-letting freely by leeches, or general bleeding to syncope, at the commencement; six hours afterwards, four grains of calomel and a dose of castor oil; and when the oil had acted, a weak dose of "eau de vie" and morphia. In twenty-four hours my patient was out of all danger from acute dysentery. Such is my treatment from experience, and I have always felt pretty certain of its results. Many coffee-planters in Ceylon can testify to this in themselves. In chronic cases I have found the most valuable relief from the use of an infusion of the rind of the fruit called mangosteen, principally grown at Singapore and Penang: this I combined with morphia.

I do not wish to detract from the benefit of Mr. Docker's treatment in cases of dysentery, but only to show how the same substance which he considers invaluable, "ipecacuanha," I have found next to useless.

If the junior medical officers now proceeding to India would make a simple note of my treatment of dysentery, I am certain they will be saved much anxiety and labour.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Clevedon, Somerset,  
August, 1858.

J. McGRIGOR CROFT, M.D.,  
Late Staff-Surgeon to H.M. Forces.

## THE LATE TRIAL AT YEOVIL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The ignorance and uncharitableness of those surgeons who, in the County Court of Yeovil, deposed, on the faith of an examination made six months after the fracture of a child's thigh, that no fracture had ever existed, are without excuse. Nothing but the strongest possible evidence could justify anyone, much more a brother surgeon, in bringing such a damning charge against the moral character of a surgeon. That such strong evidence does not exist, I am in a position to prove.

Six months ago, I was called in to a case of transverse fracture of the thigh in a child aged three years, the son of Wm.

Thompson, of Kettleby Thorp, near this place. The fracture was carefully put up with four long splints, and kept so for a fortnight. Starch bandages were then applied. Two or three weeks after, he could walk, and when I made my last visit, there was little or no difference between the two thighs.

After reading your article on "Starch Bandages and Limp Opinions," I determined to call on the first opportunity, and carefully examine the thigh, and ascertain what amount of thickness or deformity existed at the end of six months. I have done so this day, and after the most careful examination I can detect no difference between the thighs. The child can walk, run, and jump as well as ever he could, and I am confident that if any surgeon presumed to give an opinion as to the existence of fracture six months ago, founded upon any difference, discoverable by sight or touch, between the two thighs in this healthy, plump child, he would say that the thigh had never been broken. I therefore think that the evidence given by the surgical witnesses in opposition to the claim of Mr. Garland was not founded on well-ascertained facts, and that charity ought to have led them to give a less unqualified opinion.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Brigg, Aug. 13th, 1858.

JAMES B. MOXON, M.R.C.S., &c.

## MEDICAL REFORM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me the favour of a reply to the letter signed "Walter Sumpter, M.D.," in last week's LANCET. On turning to the "Directory," I find that this gentleman obtained his diplomas as late as 1856 and 1857—a rather early claimant of the privilege of censorship in medical matters, some might suggest. Mr. Sumpter speaks truly when he observes that plenty of qualified assistants are to be had; but is he aware that in many instances medical men prefer the unqualified man for various reasons, the least of which is, that it sometimes happens that the stern realities of life, together with a needy position, have given some of them a solidity of character, as well as a practical knowledge of their business, not overlooked by the liberal practitioner, and in contrast with the self-importance and superficial knowledge (frequently so) of your newly-fledged "M.R.C.S."

Mr. Sumpter speaks of his non-invidious feelings, and deservedly eulogises his medical brethren as "our benevolent ranks." His letter, however, may be looked upon as somewhat in the rear of a benevolent bias—nay, is it speaking too strongly if it is suggested that such a communication bespeaks a narrow-minded feeling rather. I think so from certain observations contained in it; and as regards the remarks concerning Christian progress, &c. &c., it is submitted that this is but a poor specimen of logical parallelism, and clearly out of place in the matter, except for the purpose of wondering which of the "thousand and one" sects of religionists this gentleman may honour with his patronage.

Lastly, it is respectfully hoped and believed that numbers of medical men will still support the intelligent and respectable assistant of this class, giving him his chance 'midst the struggles of life to earn his daily crust, in return for a due performance of his humble office, and even though he be an opprobrium to gentlemen of Mr. Sumpter's persuasion, such as your correspondent is—namely,

Congleton, August, 1858.

AN UNQUALIFIED ASSISTANT.

## BOROUGH OF REIGATE.

MR. EDWIN JAMES, Q.C., CANDIDATE FOR ITS REPRESENTATION  
IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I was much gratified by seeing your remarks relative to the election for the borough of Guildford. As the friend of the profession, I sincerely hope that Mr. Onslow will be successful, and that he will receive the support of all the medical practitioners in the neighbourhood. The candidature of Mr. Edwin James, Q.C., for Reigate is an interesting event. He is well known to be a zealous friend of the profession, and on many occasions he has spoken of their utility and importance in the highest terms of commendation. The Act we have just obtained is, I presume, only the first of a series, and it would be of immense consequence to have such a friend as Mr. James would prove in the House of Commons. He has a powerful and commanding intellect, and his oratory is of the highest order. He could not fail to exercise great influence in the House, and