

case. The fee, I repeat, is 4s. only, and the *average* charge for medicine is a fraction over 1s., making something over 5s. per patient.

No one doubts the fact that a well-educated and experienced practitioner does not stand in a superior position as to qualification than midwives; but, Sir, allow me to say the *latter* *efficiently* perform their duties, and are compelled to spend a large share of time, and exercise much patience, with the poor creatures whom they attend, and *in the most miserable and filthy places*; and looking at the numbers attended by them in each year, the major part of which is in this unfortunate position.

Now, Sir, I can scarcely think it probable that respectable professional gentlemen would devote so much time as would be required in very many instances for 10s. 6d. each case, nor indeed *for double that sum*. This question, then, resolves itself into a decided principle of finance and utility; and how much such a course as you have suggested would *curtail* the operations of the charity towards the poor who seek relief from it. This I leave you to point out, and solve, agreeably to your own views with the statistics I have given, and which are strictly correct. Financially speaking, there cannot be a doubt upon the subject, and the only apparent consideration is, whether the superior services of professional men would be in any practicable degree a satisfactory compensation for the greatly increased expenditure which such a course would entail in comparison with the present system.

The singular charge as respects one of the medical staff, as you designate it, I have only to say—had I not had the most *unquestionable authority* for making the statement, I certainly should not have done so.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
October, 1853. JAMES BAMFORD.

#### THE WAKEFIELD LUNATIC ASYLUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your leading article on the election of officers to the Wakefield Lunatic Asylum conveys an incorrect impression respecting my own position in that business, which I trust you will rectify.

So far from my not being able to get a vote, I beg to inform you that the appointment of superintendent was in my own hands, had I chosen to accept its duties, encumbered and embarrassed with the assistance of an independent matron. I have a letter from the chairman of the visiting justices to that effect.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Devon County Lunatic Asylum,  
Oct. 1853. J. C. BUCKNILL.

\* \* We think it but due to Dr. Bucknill to insert this letter. In the face, however, of other information in our possession, it does not convince us that the winning candidate was not greatly indebted to local influence for the effectual appreciation of his claims. It is clear, even from Dr. Bucknill's letter, that the claims of Dr. Bucknill were not suffered to outweigh those of the person whom it was determined to elect as matron.

#### SHAD-FLIES AT MONTREAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In a letter in last week's number of THE LANCET, from Dr. Moon, of Lewes, he mentions, in relation to the presence of swarms of flies in Newcastle, that during the prevalence of cholera in the months of June and July, 1832, in the city of Montreal, "the atmosphere was loaded with a species of fly, called the 'shad-fly,' to an unprecedented extent." &c.

The fact is perfectly true; but your correspondent is probably not aware, that the shad-fly comes as an annual visitor in swarms to most of the towns and villages on each side of the river St. Lawrence as far up as Montreal, during the time that the fish called the "shad" is tracing its course up the river for the purpose of depositing its spawn. The fish at this period are caught in large numbers. The shad-fly forms the principal food of the fish, and on its first appearance the markets are generally well supplied with the latter. The name has been given to it from its both forming the food of the shad, and being an indicator of its presence in the St. Lawrence and its tributaries. Cholera has no influence whatever over the presence or absence of these flies; in some years, however, they are more numerous than at other times.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Guildford-street, Oct. 1853. GEORGE D. GIBB, M.D.

#### THE NATIONAL VACCINE INSTITUTION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having read, with considerable surprise, a letter in your last number complaining of the managers of the National Vaccine Institution, and of the quality of the lymph which they furnish, I cannot help bearing my testimony to the invariable promptitude and courtesy which have marked their conduct towards myself; and as regards the value of the lymph, I can truly affirm that I have scarcely ever known it fail.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Plymouth, Oct. 1853. WILLIAM BRAITHWAITE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

"Fiat justitia ruat cælum."

SIR,—In THE LANCET of the 16th inst., "A. B." complains (I think unjustly) of the repeated failures in vaccination from the lymph employed, which had been procured from the National Vaccine Establishment. I have been in practice in this my native place nine years, and being the parochial vaccinator, have, I dare say, had occasion to obtain lymph from the above-named source a dozen times or more, and, with one exception, (which I named to the authorities of that establishment,) I have ever found the virus as efficient as could be desired, and "the supply" as promptly forwarded. If this statement of facts is deemed worthy a place in your talented journal, I shall feel honoured by its insertion.

I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,  
Sutton Coldfield, Oct. 1853. H. E. SHAW.

#### THE NEW VACCINATION ACT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Is the medical profession prepared to undertake the additional labour imposed upon it by the New Vaccination Act, without fee or reward? I do not observe that any penalties are attached to non-compliance on our part with the order to furnish a certificate of successful vaccination to the Registrar, and it is my intention to refuse to give any such certificate without fee.

The present would also be a proper time to consider whether we should any longer gratuitously furnish the certificates of the "cause of death;" the filling up of which often involves a considerable amount of trouble and responsibility. The whole question of gratuitous labour should be now opened up.

Your obedient servant,  
Bath, Oct. 1853. M.R.C.S.

#### CINNAMON IN CERTAIN EXAMPLES OF MENORRHAGIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On reading in the last number of THE LANCET a communication from Dr. Tanner respecting the use of cinnamon in menorrhagia, I perceive he says that no obstetric writer has made any observation regarding its utility. By referring to Dr. Rigby's work on Midwifery, in the "Library of Medicine," vol. vi. p. 209, he will find these words: "After mentioning scale and borax, Dr. Rigby says: 'Cinnamon, which is a remedy of considerable antiquity, has also a similar action on the uterus, although to a less degree.'" Having had occasion to use Dr. Rigby's formula of scale, borax, and cinnamon, very frequently, I can speak of the invariably happy effect arising therefrom.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Oct. 1853. T. W.

#### THE INTRODUCTORY LECTURE AT THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

In reply to your correspondent "R. C.," permit me to state that the words "errors of the Romish Church" were not spoken by me at the London Hospital, nor are they to be found in any printed report of my introductory lecture which has met my eye.

I remain, yours faithfully,  
Finsbury-square, Oct. 1853. RICHARD PARKER.

IMPORTATION OF OPIUM.—The quantity of opium imported in the month ended the 5th ult., was 10,832lb., against 23,991lb. in the same month in the preceding year.