

botanical terms; but I must enter my protest against the genera; the greater part of which do not even contain medical plants.

The examiner, it would seem, expects the candidates to do more than the greater number of eminent botanists ever dream of undertaking. I do not hesitate to say, that either Sir W. Jackson Hooker or Professor Lindley would be unable, without preparation, to pass such an examination. No botanist ever attempts to keep in memory any large number of genera; nor could any person possessing the most capacious mind preserve in remembrance the characters of even a few hundreds, much more the thousands of genera at present established.

It appears to me—and I have paid no small attention to botanical science—that the acquisition of the characters of one hundred out of the five hundred British genera is utterly useless to the candidate even as a mental exercise, much more so in a practical point of view. An examination on the structural and physiological characters of plants and the higher groups would be far more useful, and more easily acquired, than the dry details into which the candidates are now dragged. Moreover, I have reason to know that the answers to such questions are, as they necessarily must be, extremely imperfect. I do hope that this notice of the botanical questions will induce the learned examiner to change the plan of his next examination. I beg to apprise him that the foregoing remarks have been penned in no hostile spirit; but simply with a view to the relief of candidates, and the enhancement of the reputation of the University of which I am an unworthy member.

Permit me to subscribe myself, your obedient servant,  
London, June, 1849. M.D. Lond.

SUPPRESSION OF UTERINE HÆMORRHAGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Two of your correspondents, Dr. Slyman, in THE LANCET, for Jan. 13, and Mr. Machen, in the number for the 23rd inst., have described and illustrated a *new* apparatus for the suppression of hæmorrhage after labour. The idea of introducing a bladder into a bleeding cavity, and afterwards distending it in order to bring its walls in contact with those of the cavity from which the blood flows, is not new: it was first proposed, I believe, upwards of a hundred years ago, by that celebrated French accoucheur, M. Levret, not as a means for the suppression of hæmorrhage after labour, but for the obstinate bleeding which is sometimes the consequence of the excision of internal piles. Notwithstanding the disparity of the two cases, Levret's invention was applied by one of his countrymen, M. Rouget, to hæmorrhage after labour, but with what success is not told. One thing is certain, that, as might be expected, this imperfect mode of plugging, even in the case most favourable for its selection, and for which its author proposed it, has been generally condemned by modern French obstetricians, in its application to hæmorrhage after labour, on the ground of its being calculated to maintain the distended state of the uterus, and thus prolong the hæmorrhage.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant.  
June, 1849. T. MANLEY, M.D. of Paris.

THE "WALKER FUND."

"OUR readers will no doubt recollect, that towards the close of last year we presented to their notice, in the pages of THE LANCET, a series of papers from the pen of Mr. ALEXANDER WALKER, pointing out the extent of his claims as a pioneer in the march of discovery as relates to the physiology of the nervous system. In publishing those papers we by no means pledged ourselves (nor do we now) to an unconditional assent to the whole, or even the majority, of the views of Mr. Walker; but we must assert that enough has been adduced, both in his own statements, and in the acknowledgments, from time to time, of his contemporaries, to prove that he was the first modern observer to take a step towards a correct knowledge of the functions of the nervous system; and we accordingly claim the sympathy and aid of the profession for one who has long laboured unrequited for the advancement of others and the good of posterity. . . . There should be a state-provision, in this wealthy empire, for those who dedicate their time and energies in a zealous prosecution of science, especially a branch of natural science which demands prolonged and intricate research, and the utility of which cannot, from its very nature, be appreciated by the community at large. Failing such a resource, it becomes a matter of necessity to lay the appeal before the limited class which alone is competent to

decide the merits of the claims for which a recompence is due.

"Mr. Alexander Walker is the author of an elaborate work on the Nervous System, in which some very peculiar views are announced. He is also the author of works on "Beauty," "Woman," "Intermarriage," and a work on some fundamental principles of pathology, all characterized by much originality of observation and thought; and though last to be mentioned, by no means least in importance, he was, in 1809-10, the editor (and, we believe, almost the sole writer) of the 'Archives of Universal Science,' a work abounding in questions of recondite philosophy. . . . It were well, considering what Mr. Walker has done for science, if a representation of his circumstances were made by his professional brethren, to the Government, to obtain for him, if possible, some pension for the remainder of his life—a pension from the Government fund, which ought to be devoted to persons who, by their scientific or literary labours, have rendered services to their country. Meanwhile, it is necessary to relieve Mr. Walker's embarrassments; and in proposing that a subscription be opened for that purpose, it affords us great pleasure to be enabled to state that 'Dr. Alison, Professor of Practice of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, Mr. Goodsir, Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh, and the Rev. W. Stevenson, of South Leith, have consented to receive contributions.' We are also glad to announce that Professors Sharpey and Grant, of University College, and Professors Todd and Bowman, of King's College, London, agree to become treasurers, and we hope their example will be followed in other parts of Great Britain, by gentlemen who will communicate with the treasurers in Edinburgh or in London."—THE LANCET, March 31st, 1849.

"A short time ago, a generous and touching appeal was made by THE LANCET to the medical profession on Mr. Walker's behalf . . . and one or two of its leading members, to their everlasting honour, offered to bring a statement of Mr. Walker's circumstances and claims under the notice of the Minister at the head of the Government. This is the proper course, as already suggested by THE LANCET. . . . We hope that a nation distinguished by so many noble and generous achievements, and which owes her wealth, her power, her glory, and renown, to the scientific industry and philosophic genius of her sons, will not remain deaf to the cry of one of the most distinguished of these, when that cry is raised in distress; especially a nation, at the head of whose government is a minister, himself one of the most distinguished cultivators of literature."—(MR. LAING, in THE LANCET for June 9.)

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ARMY SURGEONS AND NAVAL ASSISTANT-SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The thanks of the medical profession are justly due to Sir De Lacy Evans for his advocacy of the cause of army medical officers, by which he has obtained a promise from the premier to institute an inquiry, with a view to alter the present system of distribution of honorary rewards towards these deserving officers. But how much more does the present position of the junior naval medical officers claim attention! Have not our universities and colleges protested against the unjust and anomalous position of naval assistant-surgeons? In what has it resulted? In nothing more than an acknowledgment on the part of the Admiralty of the petitions of all