

manders,—diminishing in some detachments, but increasing in others. The tables of mortality in New Russia state, that of 639 seized, 501 have died.

On the 9th of September the cholera reached Trebisonde: from that day to the 15th, the epidemic increased; but from the 15th to the 18th, it declined. About 300 cases occurred in this period, of which 103 died; and the sanitary physician of the city declares, that if the malady be treated early, ninety out of 100 may be saved. On the 4th of September, Erzeroum, which had suffered in July and August, began to be free from the disease, whilst it had again broken out at Bagdad, but not so severely as before, and by the last courier was announced to be on the decline.

During September, the cholera continued to rage in Southern Russia, assuming a severe form, and carrying off, as reported, whole villages, but had not passed beyond Charkow. Riga was said, but it would seem erroneously, to be visited by the epidemic. On October the 5th, the Russian official reports announced that the malady pursued its course northward and westward, and that some cases had occurred at Orel, at Toula, at Saratof, and as far as the village of Pensa, only fifty leagues from Moscow. In this, its north-western route through the province of Astrakan, and to the borders of Walachia and Moldavia, 7248 persons had been seized, of whom, 3342 had died—i.e., from the close of August, until the middle of September. The last accounts from Russia, however, state that the malady is on the decline, and that few cases are now met with in Saratof, Woronesch, Tambof, and Kasan; but that there is a fresh outbreak in Persia, whence the epidemic tends to Asiatic Turkey. It is also reported that the cholera has shown itself at Perecop, about fifty miles from Odessa; but that it is declining in intensity at Trebizond, and has disappeared from Tangarok and Marcanopol, on the shores of the sea of Asoph.

Towards the close of September, it was announced that the cholera had arrived on the frontiers of Gallicia, and that some cases had occurred in Silesia and Moravia. It has been more recently stated, that a case had presented itself in one of the hospitals of Vienna; but this wants confirmation.

From the preceding account, based on official documents, the approach of the cholera to this country is rendered morally certain; it follows pretty much the same route as heretofore, it is seen to be unstayed by climate; penetrating, as it does, towards northern Russia; to vary in intensity, and even in character, at different places; to pass over tracts of country; and not to follow, except a general north-westward course, any direction favoured by the physical features of the country, or the direction of the winds.

Upon the whole, the career of the present epidemic does not appear to be so fatal as that of the last; and it would also seem to differ in some characters, although presenting in all, that peculiar one—viz., excessive collapse.

The various governments on the continent have dispatched physicians to the foci of its action, to investigate into its phenomena and nature; England alone neglects this duty of informing herself of the disease, and of effecting energetic sanitary arrangements, and will probably remain inactive until the scourge sweeps across her surface, carrying off its thousands. If an army were advancing against us we should be active enough, but as it is only a pestilence, we sit still with shut eyes and folded hands!

Correspondence.

INADEQUATE REMUNERATION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The above subject is one upon which so much has been said and written, and with, as yet, so little avail, as almost to preclude the hope of a better condition for this ill-requited class. However, your able advocacy of the rights of all classes of our profession induces me to seek this consideration at your hands, assured, not only that a few temperate observations upon the subject, in the columns of your excellent publication, would not be misplaced, but that they may be the medium for reconsidering the injustice which is awarded to the hard-working and qualified assistant. It is an almost daily occurrence to witness advertisements offering a remuneration of £30 or £35 a year to any gentleman whose acquirements enable him to visit and dispense, and attend midwifery, and not unfrequently it is enjoined, the operations of surgery must be performed; of course this latter, in the absence of the principal, is always understood to be implied.

Really, when the expense and education that are necessary in training for the profession are considered, is not this a most beggarly remuneration? It barely suffices to maintain appearances, setting aside the necessity of change of atmosphere once, at least, during the year, for recruiting the health and strength, consequent from the wear and tear of the employed, in the duties of our arduous profession. No class of men is more tenacious of the rights and privileges of their profession than medical practitioners, and no class is more illiberal to their temporary dependants, for they reward them at the minimum rate of second-class footmen, and expect them to command the appearance of gentlemen into the bargain. This is, I am aware, an old subject, but it is nevertheless one which cannot receive harm by occasional introduction to public notice, and may perhaps awaken some consideration in appreciation of the services of the younger branches of the profession. If, therefore, you would kindly insert these few observations, you would very much oblige others, as well as, Sir, your obedient servant,

AN OLD ASSISTANT.

P.S.—I enclose you my card, though I do not wish my name to appear, for reasons which are evident.

November, 1847.

LIFE-ASSURANCE.—MEDICAL FEES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your readiness to afford assistance to the discussion of the question of the claims of medical practitioners for professional information for the guidance of assurance companies, in regard to life assurances, induces me to furnish an instance in which the Crown Life Assurance Company refused to pay for the information which I gave them respecting the case of a patient whose proposal they declined to accept. In September last I received by post the following circular from the office, signed by one of the officials, on behalf of the gentleman whose life was proposed for assurance, with the usual queries annexed, which, having answered, I returned, as requested, to the secretary of the company. As no fee was forthcoming, I addressed a note to the agent here, stating that I should not, under any circumstances, think of demanding a fee from my friend and patient, nor did I dispute his readiness to comply with such demand, but that I wished to contend for the principle—"That the company seeking advice and information for their own benefit were the parties who ought to pay for it; and that the mere fact of their paying their own general medical referee could be no reason why they should not pay for special information from those whom they suppose to be most competent to give it—viz., the usual medical attendant." I send you the reply of the company, addressed to the agent at Whitby, in reference to my application.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Whitby, August 4th, 1847.

JOHN RIPLEY.

(CIRCULAR.) 18th September, 1846.

SIR,—A proposal has been made to the Crown Life Assurance Company to effect an assurance on my life, and having named you as my medical referee, I have to request the favour of your answering the several questions annexed, and having affixed your signature thereto, that you will be pleased to forward the same, as early as possible, to the secretary of the company.

I am assured that any communication you may be pleased to make will be considered by the directors as strictly confidential, and will not in any way be suffered to transpire.

If the directors do not hear from you before the expiration of ten days from the present date, they will conclude that you decline answering, from your not considering my life eligible for assurance.—I have the honour to be Sir, your obedient servant,

(COPY.)

Crown Life Assurance Company.

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter of the 25th inst., enclosing one from Mr. Ripley, the medical referee in the case of Mr. W—, with regard to which I beg to explain, that parties proposing to assure their lives are required to furnish the office with the testimony of their medical attendant, and of a personal friend, as to their health &c., and if any charge be made by the professional gentleman referred to, it must be a matter of adjustment between him and his patient. In addition to such evidence, we require that of our own medical officer, before whom the party is requested to appear, and whose fee we pay. Under other circumstances we should have had great pleasure in remitting to Mr. Ripley the amount of his claim. Hoping that this explanation will prove satisfactory, I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

London, 28th Oct. 1846.

J. M. RAINBOW, Secretary.

DISCHARGE OF A TOOTH FROM THE EAR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following curious case happened in my practice. At the time of its occurrence I resided in the Isle of Wight. In the summer of 1846, being myself absent from home, a friend was called upon to attend an old, poor man, who had suffered for some days from severe pain over the whole of one side of the face and head, but more intensely still about the ear. He found him feverish, in great pain, and incapable of opening his mouth; the pinna and skin lining the external meatus were highly inflamed and swollen. Warm fomentations, poultices, and purgatives, were ordered. Two days afterwards I paid him a visit. He was then in great pain, and, otherwise, much in the same state as I have already described, but, in addition, there was an oozing of pus from the meatus, and almost entire closure of that passage by a whitish substance, which the patient conjectured to be a piece of onion, introduced there by the recommendation of some old woman, but which a probe detected to be bony. The patient declining to have this removed, he was recommended to continue to foment and poultice. That same night a fit of sneezing forced out the piece of bone felt by the probe, which proved to be one of the wisdom-teeth of the upper jaw; after that the man got well.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Great Malvern, Nov. 1847.

MERVIN COATES.

DR. FLEETWOOD CHURCHILL'S OBSTETRIC TABLES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you oblige me by the insertion, in an early number of your valuable periodical, of an observation or two upon a statement made by Dr. Robert Lee, in his paper "On Placenta Prævia," which I find in your journal for Oct. 23rd, 1847, and which I have read to-day for the first time.

He states (p. 440) that "Dr. Churchill having candidly acknowledged that his table, *which was composed by a pupil, and not by himself*, contains errors, it must be wholly unnecessary for me to notice," &c. &c.

Now, Sir, if Dr. Lee simply meant that I acknowledged that the table contains errors, that is true; for example, Giffard's cases, by a mistake of the printer, are stated as twenty-nine, but they are summed up as nineteen; and there may be others. But if Dr. Lee means—and it looks very like it—to insinuate that I "candidly acknowledge" that the table "was composed by a pupil, and not by myself," that is not true, and Dr. Lee knows that it is not. Two years ago I told Dr. Lee that, "being pressed for time, I employed a pupil to tabulate Giffard and one or two others"—i. e., Smellie and Perfect. But in that table there are twenty-three authors quoted; and how Dr. Lee can suppose that "Giffard and one or two others" meant that the whole table was composed by a pupil, is more than I can understand.

The letter in which I made this admission was hastily written, amidst the pressure of other occupations, and was

most unwarrantably published, without my consent, by Dr. Lee. That was, to say the least of it, uncourteous; but to distort its admissions until the statement becomes untrue, and to employ my own "candour" and "frankness" to disqualify my entire calculations, is an offence of a much graver character.

Allow me to add, Sir, that, with the exception of the tabulation of Giffard, Smellie, and Perfect, alluded to, all the statistics were collected by myself, and every line of the MS. of my books written by myself. No one who has been engaged in collecting statistics as extensively as I have can doubt, that, notwithstanding all our care, errors will creep in; but no one can be more anxious to correct them than—your obedient servant,

Stephen's Green, Dublin, November, 1847.

F. CHURCHILL.

MEDICAL PROTECTION SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Finding, from communications which I have received, that misapprehension prevails respecting the Medical Protection Society, may I beg the favour of a space in your columns to place the matter in its proper light? The Medical Protection Society is not in any way a rival to the Association of Poor-law Surgeons, but when fully carried out, may be the means of affording it material assistance. The object of the Society is to form an organization of medical men in all parts of the United Kingdom, to obtain the removal of all the social grievances under which we labour. The poor-law medical officers, insurance office fees, naval and military medical service, attendance in police cases, hospital and dispensary appointments, the encroachments of illegal practitioners, and various other grievances of more or less importance, whether occurring in England, Ireland, or Scotland, are subjects proper for the consideration of the Medical Protection Society. It is quite useless for us to attempt to get redress whilst we are disunited, but only let us unite, and by a steady, uniform course of action, we cannot fail of success. My object is simply to form the organization, and let the mode of proceeding be determined on by the body when formed. I am anxious that the Society should rest on the broadest basis possible—that its constitution should be of the most liberal kind—that all its members may have the utmost scope for the free expression of opinion on all points brought before it—and that the greatest amount of mutual support may be secured, with the least individual inconvenience; so that any injury offered to any of our members, however humble the person, or how remote soever the district, would immediately meet the quiet but determined resistance of the whole body, from Land's-end to John o' Groats, and from Lowestoff to Galway. This may easily be accomplished by union; a committee in London, with a secretary in each district, would be sufficient, the communications being made by post. The necessary funds would be raised by a small annual subscription, as the mere existence of a complete organization, always ready to repel an attack from any quarter, would be the surest means of preventing any attempt at encroachment on our just rights. By means of this Society, we should no longer require to ask that protection which the legally constituted guardians of our profession owe, but fail to afford us; we should have a more certain means in our own hands. In many cases the present laws are sufficient, if put in force; but this cannot be done by individuals; union is required, and in no case can any good be done without it. "Providence will help those who try to help themselves," and "Those who will not help themselves, the devil himself cannot help," are two old proverbs, well worth the consideration of every medical man at the present time. There is not one member of our profession whose interest is not concerned. To all, then, I say, UNITE AT ONCE. Let all who can do so afford their assistance to the poor-law convention, but at the same time unite in the permanent organization sought to be attained by the formation of the Medical Protection Society. By the present rules of the Society, "Any person holding a licence or diploma from any legally authorized body in the United Kingdom, or legally entitled to practise medicine, is eligible to become a member, on application to the secretary." The subscription is five shillings; and each member signs an obligation to "strictly comply with the rules." The only law binding to any particular course of action is the seventh—"That no member shall answer the questions of any insurance society, except on receipt of a fee of one guinea."—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. W. WARDER.

Upper Robert-street, Chelsea, Nov. 1847.