

those cases of complicated disease" contained in my report, is to me perfectly incomprehensible; for I am informed that his visit was made to the house on the 16th, and that "Maypole" or "Maple" died on the following day, and Black on the 23rd, of the most "formidable" of these "complications," as will be seen on referring to Mr. Biddle's report.

I have no right to quarrel with the "opinions" expressed by Mr. Biddle, when they do not impugn my *statement* as to matters of fact; for upon subjects connected with hygiene and the treatment of disease he may be a better authority than myself; but to the opinions expressed in my report I strictly adhere, believing sincerely as I do that they are founded upon just grounds. It may not be out of place to observe that one of the guardians of the union, I find, is a member of our profession, and visited the house three or four days before I did; and in regard to the points of difference between myself and Mr. Biddle respecting certain cases of scalp disease, on referring to the report, I observe that he entirely agrees with me as to their nature. With regard to the assertion of Mr. Biddle, that my report contained "exaggerations," I am grieved to say that the cases of the poor children were too severe to require any addition. The way in which my report has been attempted to be answered may be judged of by the following simple fact:—A pauper nurse, named Mary Powell, who could neither read nor write, had the sole, entire, unassisted charge of the infirmary. I had great difficulty in procuring the names of the various children, many of them being mere infants. It appears that one of the names in my report is not the correct one, the Christian name of the child being given instead of the surname. This case is thus disposed of in the remarks on my report:—"Oliver. No such person in the house!"

I shall now leave the case in your able hands, and have to apologize for the length to which my letter has extended; but though much of it refers to myself, it was necessary to make you acquainted with the facts herein stated before you could comment upon a pamphlet in most important aspects of interest to the profession.

In conclusion, I would beg to say that I rejoice to hear that the poor children are now very much better attended to, and I trust that the part I have taken in this most painful matter will be regarded as reflecting no dishonour on that profession to which I belong—a profession whose greatest privilege has ever been to range itself on the side of the suffering and the distressed.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Gerrard-street, Soho, Feb. 1852.

J. F. CLARKE.

SEARCH FOR SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—You are probably aware that a private expedition is now being organized, and is in a few days to start for Behring's Strait, in search of Sir John Franklin. It is under the command of the projector, Mr. Donald Beatson, a captain in the merchant service, who devotes to this purpose the whole available amount of his small funds, as well as his own energies and experience. The expedition requires a medical officer, and I have been asked by Lady Franklin to aid her in obtaining one for this service. Since the qualifications required for such a duty are rare, I have ventured to trouble you with this communication, since by giving publicity to the facts contained in it the most suitable person would be more certainly met with. Captain Beatson contemplates devoting no less than five years, if necessary, to the search for the lost navigators, although he has the strongest confidence that within that period he shall fall in with them, or solve the intolerable mystery of their fate.

To any one of scientific taste and a love of research, a more interesting field could not be presented, since it is but little known. There is, perhaps, no department of science which could not be enriched, not even (according to Russian tradition) the study of mankind. In addition to such a taste and the love of enterprise, there must be a hardy temperament, fitted for a residence in such latitudes, and an active, muscular, and sanguine constitution. It is the more necessary to lay stress upon scientific inducements and the spirit of enterprise, since pecuniary emolument must, from the circumstances of the case, be regarded as secondary. The means at Mr. Beatson's disposal are very restricted; he himself makes the greatest personal sacrifices, devoting not only his unpaid services, both in the equipment and conduct of the expedition, but also all the private resources he has at command. It is, however, to be remembered that, in addition to the terms he proposes, the Government reward of £20,000 is still held out, and that this expedition is not unlikely to make a title to it, or at least a part of it, by ascertaining the fate of our missing countrymen.

To be medical officer of such an expedition is to fill a post of

high honour, and he who with intellectual and physical capabilities for the task volunteers to accept the appointment, will deserve a rank amongst the best and noblest examples of heroism of which our profession can boast.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Finsbury-square, Feb. 1852.

WILLIAM W. GULL.

THE HUNTERIAN ORATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There is a sort of mental obliquity to which members of Parliament are subject on passing from one side of the house to the other, and which seems to attack members of the College also when they pass to the governing body from that which is governed. This struck me particularly on a recent occasion, and gave origin to the following letter, addressed

To James Luke, Esq., Vice-President of the College of Surgeons, &c.

MY DEAR SIR,—Some twenty-six years since, when you were demonstrator at the London Hospital, and I a pupil, I should have been surprised to have heard you utter such language as you are reported to have done, in the *Times* of the 17th inst., in your Hunterian Oration.

Your prognostic of my fate was realized, and I was admitted a member of the College of Surgeons—an honour I have ceased to appreciate, since the Council of the College, under the authority of their new Charter, have named men, my juniors in the profession by many years, fellows of the College, and refuse me the title unless I submit to a second examination, and pay a considerable fee.

You may regret "that either folly or avarice has withdrawn many persons from the legitimate paths of the profession;" but have you no regret for those who have thus been unjustly stigmatized as inferior, who have been cast as it were into the second rank, while their juniors have been carried over their heads into the first? Might not this act of the Council be quoted as "another example which serves to make manifest to what a depth of degradation the mind can and will descend when not upheld by the dictates of moral rectitude"? "Godlike though our profession be, when properly used, how fallen from that high similitude when perverted to the ignoble purposes only of an absorbing avarice." And what other name can be ascribed to an act which does not find a single advocate out of the ranks of those who directly benefited by it?

I am, my dear Sir,

Brussels, Feb. 19, 1852.

YOUR FORMER PUPIL.

If you think the above worthy a place in your valuable journal, you will oblige,

ONE WHO HAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE PROFESSION.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.—The examination of candidates for Fellowships, in classics, mathematics, and French will be held in the first week in March, and the professional examination for Fellowships in the first week in April. The following will be the subjects of examination:—In Classics—Either of the following Greek and Latin authors—Herodotus, book 3; The Iliad, book 6; Virgil's *Æneid*, book 8; and Livy. In Mathematics—arithmetic, algebra, as far as to include the doctrine of proportions and simple equations, with one or two unknown quantities; Euclid, books 1, 2, and 3; hydrostatics, acoustics, and optics. In French—translations into English of passages from one of the French classical writers.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of gentlemen who passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise, on

Thursday, Feb. 19th, 1852.

BROWN, THOMAS JOHN EAMES, Dorchester, Dorset.
RHODES, GEORGE SAMUEL, Dewsbury, Yorkshire.

RESUMPTION OF LECTURES OF M. ORFILA.—The eminent toxicologist, M. Orfila, had of late been seriously indisposed, to such an extent indeed as to alarm his friends. But the worthy professor resumed his lectures a few days ago, and his re-appearance gave rise to a demonstration of respect and attachment from the pupils, who received him with loud acclamations. M. Orfila addressed a few grateful and affectionate words to the young men, and the scene was of a kind which had not been witnessed for some time at the faculty.