

it, and it does not at all seem likely to me, that were that not the case, the self-called National Institute (but without one atom of nationality in it—national, I presume, meaning, in its most limited sense, "public" or "general," whereas I cannot find that this exalted body possesses any such properties) would be selected for those purposes. When students work hard for their diplomas, they expect, and that rightly enough, that they will bear the signatures of individuals eminent, in the highest degree, in the different branches of their profession, whose names in themselves would give a dignity and shed a lustre over their hard sought-for prize. That this could not be the case with this fresh-advertised clique—the offspring of a rapidly decaying licensing body—must be apparent to all. How is it, I would ask, that the students think so much of their diploma from the Royal College of Surgeons of England, but from the fact of its being connected with the names of eminent and learned individuals? and how is it that the M.D. is now so common in general practice, numbers of whom are practising without perhaps ever knowing where the Blackfriars' establishment is situated, but that they consider it a greater honour than the L.A.C.? Indeed, that this latter Company might be very well dispensed with, as regards medical examination, is now the opinion of all, except those who, as you justly state, wish to graft themselves upon the old stock, and thus endeavour to thrust themselves forward, by name alone, as the advertised head and home of the surgeons of this country, or, as they call themselves, of medicine, surgery, and midwifery. We have those two time-honoured institutions, the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, whose by-gone members have scattered such a bright halo around the profession of medicine, and whose present ones are known wherever English science is heard of and respected. Surely these, if any bodies can be, are fully competent to examine in all the branches which necessarily belong to medical study; where, then, can this puffing Institute, unknown except in the advertising columns, find ground to take its stand? Again: we have that noble fountain of learning, the University of London, whose degrees are everywhere held in the highest estimation; and if the Apothecaries' Company, who, in their day, have well executed the task assigned to them of examining, are considered at the present time to be unnecessary as a licensing body, where can another corporation, in every way inferior, find room to rear its insignificant head? Well, indeed, do you believe that the surgeons of England will not allow themselves to be bound to an inferior institution: no greater insult can be offered; neither is such a thing likely to be, I trust, while the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons occupy a station in this country. Wishing you all success in your arduous position, and that you may be enabled to see the result of your highly honourable undertaking, I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
HENRY SMITH PALMER, M.R.C.S.E. & L.A.C.
Mortlake, Surrey, Feb. 1848.

THE CROYDON INQUEST.—PROPOSITION FOR THE CIRCULATION OF "THE LANCET LEADING ARTICLE."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg very respectfully to suggest to the profession, but to poor-law medical officers in particular, that a copy of the leading article on the Croydon Inquest, contained in THE LANCET of Saturday, Jan. 29th, now published in the form of a small pamphlet, be immediately transmitted to every member of parliament, and to the editors of the metropolitan press.

This may be accomplished by an outlay of a few pounds, and I have little doubt that the sowing of such seed will produce a tenfold return. It affords an opportunity of impressing on the minds of the legislature the arduous duties which the medical officer has to undergo, and of illustrating the gross wrongs with which he has to contend. This opportunity ought not to be lost. Members of Parliament require instruction on medical points, and, I believe, will courteously receive it, when its object is to expose a system of terrible injustice. Let us take every means, then, to enlighten Parliament, and in proportion as we succeed in that, so will our efforts redound to our own advantage.

Six hundred and fifty-eight copies, at 8s. per hundred, will amount to £2 12s. 6d., say £3. Postage stamps, to £2 14s. 10d., say £3. Then there will be payment to the secretary who shall undertake to address and forward them. For £10, therefore, the business may be fully carried out, and a small subscription from those who take an interest in this matter (and who does not?) will at once realize the amount required.

If this suggestion meet with approval, I shall have much pleasure in transmitting my quota of any subscription which may be deemed necessary.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
Cheapside, Halifax, Feb. 1848. FREDERICK SMITH GARLICK.

ASIATIC CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will that dreadful scourge the cholera visit our island again? and if so, are medical men prepared to wage war against it? I ask this on these grounds:—In a conversation with my family medical attendant, I inquired—If myself, wife, or children, should be attacked with cholera, what mode of treatment would you adopt? His reply was, "I scarcely know; there are so many remedies proposed." As a husband, and father of five lovely children, what must my feelings have been at this reply? I admired the candour of my medical friend, in whom I had the greatest confidence, but told him that if the cholera should visit my house he must excuse my calling him in.

Can you tell me, Sir, to whom I may apply in such a case of need; for perhaps many other medical men may not have made up their minds on the subject. May I be allowed, through your valuable journal, to propose that meetings should be held in different localities, that the remedies already tried and those proposed be fairly discussed, and that some mode of treatment, which may be decided upon by the majority, be laid before the Board of Health, or at a general meeting of medical men, and adopted if so approved. That a resolution amongst themselves be passed, that every medical man shall forward to a certain body, appointed for that purpose, his success, or non-success, in the treatment of every case that may fall under his care, with the remedies adopted, whatever they might be. A statistical account of deaths and recoveries being kept, and reported in the medical journals, with mode of treatment &c., would enable the profession to draw their conclusions, and no one in future would have to say, "Why I scarcely know; there are so many remedies proposed."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

PATER.

February, 1848.

ON SUMMONING MEDICAL WITNESSES AT INQUESTS.

In a letter addressed to us, in reply to Mr. French's last communication to the Editor of THE LANCET, Mr. Redford remarks:—

"Mr. French imagines (though how is a puzzle, for he quotes my words) that I say a certain surgeon gave "a false certificate of death." If he refer to his own letter, he will see my words quoted correctly, as "a certificate of death," meaning that the surgeon, having attended the deceased, was perfectly convinced as to the cause of death, and was enabled to fill up the certificate accordingly, although the death might have been sudden, and not during an attendance,—circumstances sufficient to warrant an inquest, though one might not have been absolutely necessary. Now such a certificate would not be a false certificate, as Mr. French absurdly imagines. The assumed case which follows in the letter is a preposterous creation, as totally irrelevant as the remarks about "Medical Reform Act, and expulsion from professional ranks, the hopelessness of parish surgeons escaping censure, and the high principles absolutely necessary to sustain a parish surgeon in his office for seventeen years." Your readers will observe that, though Mr. French tries to insinuate that the instances given by me are untrue, he has never attempted to deal with the facts, they remain firm and unassailed, and, I have reason to believe, will be confirmed and more fully laid before you by those gentlemen in whose experience they occurred, and others of my acquaintance, who, so far from joining in the sentiments of Mr. French, have expressed their thanks to me for taking the trouble to discuss the matter."

Golden-square, Feb. 1848.

A DEFINITION OF QUACKERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I addressed a note to you some months ago, for the purpose of recording the death of an old man from Holloway's pills; and, at the same time, I drew your attention to the fearful progress of quacks and quackery in the manufacturing districts—from the peripatetic venders of cough lozenges and worm powders, to the exhibitors of the bubbles and sugar-milk of homeopathy. A certain notorious practitioner of the "do-nothing" system, who was then, and is still, carrying matters with a high hand in this neighbourhood, was mightily irate and indignant at being classed with his compeers; but a man's deeds, not his professions, must be the proof of his orthodoxy.

I say, that that man, who, to get practice, proclaims himself a philanthropist, desirous of benefiting his species, not anxious for money, who gulls by his professions and gratuitous attend-