accident, and was expelled spontaneously at the end of that period; on examination, it proved to be a cherry-stone encrusted with calcareous matter. The *acta curiosa*, said the reporter, contains the history of a case in which a similar body remained for twelve months in the air passages. The author of the paper thought that the cherry-stone had remained in one of the ventricles of the larynx, from the circumstance of its not having excited any cough; but M. Berard was of opinion, that the absence of any accident showed that the foreign body had lodged in the back of the mouth or pharynx.

In a discussion which followed, M. Gerdy observed, that although foreign bodies in the air passages generally excite cough, and give rise to symptoms of suffocation, yet several exceptions to this rule have occurred. Thus, Desault once passed a tube into the trachea by mistake, and only discovered his error when he had injected a quantity of broth into the air passages; the instrument had not excited the slightest cough during its introduction. M. Gerdy thought that dyspnoea and cough were not necessarily connected with the presence of foreign bodies in the air passages, except while those bodies are traversing the aperture of the glottis.

M. Rochoux related the following case, which had come under his own observation. A carpenter, while taking his soup in a great hurry, swallowed the portion of string by which the leeks are tied together; he was seized at once with cough, and accessions of suffocation. These gradually disappeared, but a new train of symptoms set in; these continued for eighteen months, and assumed all the appearance of pulmonary consumption. The string, however, was spit up during a violent fit of coughing, and the man soon recovered.

EXTIRPATION OF A FIBROUS TUMOUR OF THE BODY OF THE UTERUS.

M. Amussat exhibited a fibrous tumour, which he had removed from the body of the uterus of a woman fifty years of age. The tumour was situated in the interior wall of the organ, was completely enveloped in the muscular tissue, and had given rise to frequent hæmorrhage, by which the patient had been much reduced. The anterior lip of the os tinæ was very large; the posterior one thin and small.

MM. Recamier, Amussat, and several other physicians, having decided on the nature of the disease, the operation was performed on the 29th September, in the following manner:—The anterior wall of the neck of the uterus was first divided by a crucial incision; this enabled the operator to fix the double hook (*pincees Museux*) on the lower portion of the tumour, which was thus exposed; the tumour was now drawn downwards, and by placing the hooks in different portions of it, as it was successively detached, and making traction, the whole tumour was at last enucleated from the walls of the uterus; some symptoms of phlebitis supervened, but soon disappeared, and the patient is now (two months after the operation) in a state of excellent health.

M. Amussat also exhibited a somewhat smaller tumour of the same kind, which he had removed last year from the posterior wall of the uterus of a woman forty-seven years of age. This patient is now perfectly well.

When tumours of this kind, said M. Amussat, exist in the walls of the uterus, we have an almost certain means of diagnosing them, by passing a catheter into the os uteri; the depth to which the instrument penetrates will indicate the change that has taken place in the size of the uterine cavity, and assist us in determining its cause. When the tumour is very large, the surgeon may simply incise the envelope which encloses the fibrous tumour, and leave the rest to nature; expulsive pains soon set it, and separate it from the surrounding tissues.

In illustration of the above case, M. Begin men-

tioned the history of a woman who had been admitted three or four years ago into the Strasburg hospital, with a fibrous tumour which completely filled the vagina. After considerable traction, the tumour suddenly escaped like a cork out of a bottle, and as there was no trace of pedicle on its surface, M. Begin conceived that it was a fibrous tumour of the uterus, which had burst its envelope and escaped into the vagina.

THE POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS AND THE TENDER SYSTEM.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I have frequently read with regret the letters and remarks in the "Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal," and in other medical periodicals, since the passing of the New Poor Law Amendment Act, against the system pursued by the poor-law commissioners and the guardians, in appointing medical officers to the districts in the various unions formed since the act came into operation, and I often wonder why it is, that the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association should be so anxious for an alteration or repeal of this act; for I have not been able to discover in it any clause that in the slightest degree relates to the medical profession; nor do I recollect of ever reading, or hearing, of any act of the poor-law commissioners, or guardians of any union, towards the members of the medical profession, that should tend to degrade them, or that should render the poor-law commissioners deserving the censure passed on them by your various correspondents. I certainly have heard of persons calling themselves medical men, accepting of tenders, and promising to cater for the paupers at about a penny per head; this is considered by many to be lowering the professional character: but this is the act and deed of the individual himself, and not of the poor-law commissioners; they have sins of commission enough to answer for, without this crime of degrading the medical profession being added to it.

One of the principal objects of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association was, I understood, the maintenance of the honour and respectability of the profession; this I hope they will do, and not ask the poor-law commissioners to do it for them. I have been led to make these remarks on reading the report of the poor-law committee, and the account of the meeting of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, held at York, in August last, in which I find the following statement:—"The first business was the reading of the poor-law committee report, which first alluded to the continual abuses still remaining under the poor-law system, such as the tender system, and the present plan of parochial appointments, with the remuneration attached, all of which fully attested the unfitness of the present commissioners to interfere in medical matters."

This is a reflection on the poor-law commissioners, in my opinion, quite uncalled for, and not merited by them; I see no clause in the Poor-law Amendment Act giving the said commissioners an extraordinary power over the medical profession, nor do I remember ever seeing any rule or order sent out by them at all calculated to injure or degrade medical men or the profession; on the contrary, all the rules and orders circulated by them, I think, are calculated to keep up its dignity rather than to degrade its members; in one of their reports I find the following paragraph:—"In regulating the appointments of medical officers within the new unions, we have acted on the presumption, that by the words of the act (that the medical officer shall be a person duly licensed to practise as a medical man) it was intended to include equally physicians, surgeons, or apothecaries, duly licensed to practise as such."

With respect to the general professional qualifications of the medical men who come within the words of the act, we have relied on the diplomas of those who are charged by the legislature with the duty of examining the qualifications of the candidates for practice, being assured that the recent improvements in medical practice and education are such as in general to render the later diplomas, certificates of a degree of competency equivalent to such practice on the part of those who have had an earlier education; under these circumstances we have considered that the interests of the public, and of the profession itself, were the least served by keeping the situation of medical officers in the new unions open to the competition of the whole body of medical practitioners. Instead of attempting to fix the price of the services of the medical practitioner for the union, we deemed it the most advantageous that each practitioner should fix the price of his own services under competition." Now there is nothing in this paragraph that I can discover calculated to degrade the profession, or to lower it in the estimation of the public; nothing could be more candid and honourable on their part. The poor-law commissioners have no more to do with the appointment of medical men to the various union districts, than the council of the "Provincial Medical and Surgical Association" have; this power is, I think, very wisely delegated to the guardians; they are the persons most likely to know the nature of the wants and the necessities of the paupers in their own immediate neighbourhood, and to be the best able to judge of the fitness and qualifications of those who may offer themselves as medical candidates. I know that the appointments made by the boards of guardians are not valid, till confirmed by the commissioners, but I don't believe that their confirmation is ever withheld, or that they ever interpose unless there is some very good ground for it, such as medical men in the neighbourhood of a union combining together to prevent competition, or their offering resistance to the appointment made by the guardians. There certainly can be no objection to the mode adopted by the guardians in obtaining medical men for the union districts, by throwing it open to competition, and the making known their wants, by by advertising, and their advertisements are generally headed to *legally qualified medical men*, which is a proof that they will treat with none but regular men. This mode of obtaining medical men is not peculiar to them; all public institutions requiring medical or surgical aid do it, and by so doing they frequently bring into note men of talent, that otherwise would never have been known, and the public deprived of their skill and usefulness. Were the guardians to give the situation of medical and surgical attendant to any particular individual in the district, they would then, most probably, be accused of favouritism or jobbing, or as the Tories would call it Whiggery; in pursuing the course they have, the guardians are following the example of the trustees of all the large hospitals; only the one, I believe, appoints; the other elects; and most of us know the manœuvring that goes on when a medical or surgical vacancy occurs in any of the charitable institutions; and what stratagems are had recourse to on such occasions, in getting new subscribers, in order to make votes for the different candidates; and in many cases these new guinea subscribers have more to do with the success of the elected man than his professional acquirements. Now, I never heard of any complaint being raised against this system, and I think if the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association had petitioned Parliament on the subject, or consulted any learned sergeant of the law, as to the means to be adopted to prevent it, I should have heard of it. I certainly have never heard of any blame being attached to those eminent physicians, or the skilful surgeons who daily give so large a portion of their valuable time to the public hospitals and dis-

pensaries; this is very laudable, and is, no doubt, disinterested on the part of those learned gentlemen; but we all know the object they have in view; it is to get practice; and they also know that generally this is the high road to fame and notoriety; and by this notoriety they get patients and attract, to the different hospitals to which they are attached, patients who are not the most needy, and invite others there who could afford to pay, and would pay, a trifling fee to their more necessitous professional brethren; this is done to a great extent in cities and large towns, and is very injurious to the junior general practitioners. If the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association would suggest some plan to prevent this, they would be serving the younger branches of the profession, and be benefiting those institutions which have been the stepping stone to honour and fame of many a physician and surgeon; but such conduct obstructs the progress of others to it. If a young man who has just entered the profession, with ample testimonials of his skill and ability, choose, and in order to exercise that skill for the benefit of his fellow-creatures, by contracting to attend the paupers in a union district at a small sum per head, or at a very small amount for the whole number, in order to remunerate himself for horse-hire, medicine, &c., he is directly accused of acting unprofessionally and degrading the medical profession. The Provincial Medical and Surgical Association are not content in using all their influence to prevent this, but application is made by them to a learned sergeant to frame a clause, to be inserted in any bill that may be brought before the legislature to amend the present poor-law system, for the purpose of preventing a young practitioner exercising those talents that have cost him so much time and money to acquire; and the learned sergeant was moreover expected to support it in the House of Commons, and no doubt his powerful talent would have had its weight, if he had been there. The party, who are so anxious for suppressing this mode of obtaining a practical knowledge of the profession, will now have to look out for another advocate in the House of Commons; but before they do so, I hope they will bear in mind, that the young men who are thus acting are legitimately pursuing the path to fame and notoriety; and there are many old practitioners, who are in self-defence obliged to tender and contract, and think it no derogation; we know their motive is not the same as the junior practitioner; they do it to prevent another coming into their neighbourhood, who would interfere with their practice.

I hope I have said enough to prove that the poor-law commissioners are not to blame; they have nothing to do with the terms of the medical and surgical contractors. The boards of guardians are the guardians of the purses of the rate-payers, as well as of the paupers; and they are bound to procure the best medical and surgical attendance for those who may require it, at the lowest possible rate. I should like to know who was to blame in the case mentioned by Mr. Brame, of Lowestoft, in your Journal for Nov. 27—the medical man that sent in the lowest tender or the party that accepted it? The medical man who contracts to attend the paupers of any union at a low rate, or at a small sum per head, for the purpose of professional employment, and to introduce himself to the notice of the public, is not, in my opinion, degrading himself or the profession. If he does it, it is his own act, and not the poor-law commissioners. I wish it to be understood that I am not an advocate for the system of contracting and tendering; I am only anxious to show that the commissioners are not deserving the scandal and opprobrium heaped on them by some of the medical journals, and many members of the profession.

I well know that there were great abuses in the medical department under the old poor-law system; medical men were then in the habit of making shameful charges, and sending in very heavy bills every

year to the parish officers; in many cases the parish practice was the best and most profitable part of a country surgeon's practice. I admit it would be much more honourable and respectable on the part of the guardians, were they to fix a fair remunerating sum, according to the number of paupers and the size of the district; and I think such a plan is practicable. The competitors for the situation would then be on an equal footing, as to the emolument to be derived from the office. Should you consider these observations suitable for the Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal, your inserting them in an early number will oblige your obedient servant,

GEORGE KING.

Bath, Dec. 8th, 1841.

*** We give insertion to the letter of Mr. King, as a matter of curiosity. A defence of the poor-law commissioners, and of the tender system, from the pen of a medical man, is really a *phenomenon*. For a refutation of Mr. King's arguments, we have only to refer to the poor-law report of the provincial association, the concluding portion of which is contained in our present number.—EDS.

THE TENDER SYSTEM.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I greatly regret that I am compelled to occupy the pages of your valuable Journal, with matter of so little worth to the profession at large, but I cannot allow Mr. Chalk's explanatory letter to pass over, without explaining away the errors it contains. I think, gentlemen, the simple fact of my not replying to Mr. Vale's inquiry, is a sufficient proof that it was not the *person*, but the *system*, which I attacked; and as I have always lived on terms of friendliness with my medical brethren, regret that any thing should occur to break that bond of union which has subsisted amongst us. Mr. Chalk observes, that upon the resignation of the late medical officer, "an advertisement was subsequently put forth, and an active canvass took place by four candidates," including myself in the number. I beg distinctly to state, that the steps which I took towards obtaining the appointment were effected long before the appearance of that advertisement, which announced that the election should take place by tender. Mr. C— goes on to observe, "so strenuous was he in the cause, that he not only canvassed, but sent to all the guardians and directors a note," &c.; and that "after all this extraordinary exertion, he withdrew himself from the contest. Whether he was suddenly disgusted with the tender system, or found that he had not sufficient strength, I cannot say." To be as concise as possible, I would remark that, owing to the solicitations of my friends, some of whom possess considerable influence at the "quarterly board," I did send a circular, &c., to some of the directors and guardians; but "so strenuous was I in the cause," and so "extraordinary" were my "exertions," that I personally "canvassed"—not all, but, to the best of my recollection, only one of the directors or guardians. You must bear in mind, gentlemen, that up to this period I was unaware that the election would take place by tender; and as soon as I ascertained this circumstance, I went so far as to inform one of the candidates that I had declined the contest. My disgust towards the tender system arose from no sudden impression, for at a similar election, some few years ago, I then refused to "seek office," on account of the method employed. As to my not having "*sufficient strength*," I must take leave to say that I have been longer established in this, my native parish, than the gentleman who has undertaken the respon-

sible office of a medical attendant upon the poor, resident in eight parishes, at the salary of £16 per annum.

Having handled the subject as *tenderly* as circumstances would admit, believe me to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL S. BRAME.

Lowestoft, Dec. 14, 1841.

REMUNERATION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL SURGICAL AND MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—In your periodical for the 4th of December, I observed a letter from Dr. Tunstall, on the propriety of medical practitioners taking certain fees in lieu of charging for their medicine. I perfectly agree with Dr. Tunstall in all he says so far, but differ with him in his suggestion for turning the whole of the dispensing over to the druggists. For, in the first place, it would be attended with great inconvenience, and send every patient in the country to a druggist's shop, often many miles distant; and, secondly, we could not always depend upon the accuracy of their dispensing and the quality of the drugs. The best and most honourable way would be to charge fees and supply the medicine gratis. And, in order that all parties might have medical aid, the fee should range from half-a-crown to two guineas for each attendance, surgical operations excepted. Such fees to be made legal, and recoverable by Act of Parliament. This plan would meet the circumstances of all grades of society; nor need any body complain of the charge, for it would be easy for the patient to ask "What is your fee?" or for the surgeon to say my fee is so and so, thereby giving the patient the option of going to one whose fee was less.

Your obedient servant,

W. JOHNSON.

Watlington Cottage, Dec. 14, 1841.

NEW EDITION OF MÜLLER'S PHYSIOLOGY.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—May I beg the favour of the insertion of a few lines, in your widely-circulated Journal, in the hope that they may reach the glance of the able translator, or publisher of Müller's Physiology? In common with many others, I subscribed for that work, when the first part appeared; since then, and previous to the publication of the last part, a second edition of the first vol. has been issued, with, I observe (from the references and errata in last part), considerable additions, and of course, improvements. Whilst gladly congratulating those gentlemen on its extended sale, I would appeal to their justice and liberality, whether those who subscribed at the beginning should, in consequence, possess a less valuable copy, and whether the improvements in question might not be furnished separately, or the spirit of them, in an appendix, with the last part, to the early subscribers; as one I should cheerfully be at additional expense, to possess the best edition of so valuable a work, and should not now complain, had the work been completely published, however soon a new edition might appear; but in the present instance, should the above suggestion not be complied with, in the absence of any fault on our part, we shall each possess an inferior edition.

I am, Gentlemen, yours faithfully,

S. KNOTT.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, Dec. 11, 1841.