compulsion, often from the most intense privations, borne until no longer endurable, especially if a married woman, and, if single, in a state of mental despondency and irritability, which is aggravated by the close confinement which the rules of the house prescribe.

Besides the confinement belonging to these houses, the change of diet, from extreme want to sufficiency, is not unlikely to operate prejudicially, when combined with loss of exercise, and of the society of friends.

Still there are many circumstances connected with them which counterbalance these disadvantages, in the good nursing, medical attendance, general cleanliness, and physical comforts which they undoubtedly allow to those who would otherwise, at their own miserable homes, be subjected to accumulated suffering. In our own union house I can bear witness to the attention that is given to these cases by the mistress, and that they have every comfort and every indulgence which the rules allow, both before and after confinement, so that there can be no in-door reason for a preponderance of these lamentable diseases, beyond what is common to all such institutions. I am, therefore, the more anxious to ascertain if any of your readers have observed similar results.

I will not now trespass on your pages with a relation of the cases; I treated them, as is usual, with bleeding, according to the severity of the attack, and their powers of bearing it, with cold to the head, turpentine enemata, mustard cataplasms, and occasionally an opiate after bleeding, to allay irritability, and, with the exception of one case, they all did well; my intention being, as I have previously stated, merely to obtain the results of the experience of others under similar circumstances, or whose experience is yet wanting, to show the possibility of occurrences so truly mortifying, and so full of anxiety to the medical attendant.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obliged servant,
ROBERT STORRS.

Doncaster, May 16, 1843.

BENEVOLENT FUND.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I am extremely happy to perceive, from the letter of Mr. Lee, in your last Number, that the benevolent fund of the association is beginning to attract the notice of the members.

Amongst the various objects proposed to be fulfilled by the founders of the association, useful and honorable as they are, and well as they have been in general carried out, none, in my mind, is so creditable to the society as the formation of the benevolent fund, which took place at the anniversary meeting held at Oxford in 1835. I would here remark, that it is *purely* a benevolent fund, *not* a benefit society, to obtain relief from which it is necessary to have been a subscriber for a certain number of years previously. The only claim to relief from our fund is to be a recognised member of the profession (or the widow or child of one), to be in distressed circumstances, and to possess a good moral character. To those who will take the

trouble of looking over the annual reports made to the association by the central committee, it will be evident how much good has already been done by the charity, and equally evident how much *more* might have been done, had each member of the association contributed only a few shillings annually. Perhaps no one can form an idea of the numerous instances of distress and destitution that exist amongst highly respectable and worthy members of our profession, except those who, like the committee of the benevolent fund, are in the habit of having such cases brought before them. Many such cases the committee have had the gratification of relieving, and some of them connexions and descendants of medical men of the highest fame and character; but they have also in many instances been compelled, from the inadequacy of the funds at their disposal, to decline giving aid, where the circumstances would otherwise have fully warranted a liberal donation.

The fund, although established in 1835, did not commence its operations until 1836, between which year and the month of July, 1840, the sum of £275 was dispensed by the committee to distressed members of the profession or their families. At the anniversary meeting held at Southampton in 1840, it was found necessary, from want of money, to suspend the operations of the committee, and during the space of the two following years no aid was granted, during which period the claims for relief, as may be supposed, accumulated greatly. At length, at the meeting held last year at Exeter, the restriction upon the committee was taken off, and since that time more than £200 has been distributed in small sums to the most urgent cases brought before the committee. Once more the available fund is nearly exhausted, and I would earnestly entreat every member of the profession, and every benevolent person, to aid this admirable charity to such extent as may be in their power. There are very few who could not afford to give five shillings annually, and many who could give much more; and it should be borne in mind that it is the *annual subscriptions only* that are available for the immediate purpose of relieving distress, the *donation* fund being an accumulating one, to be hereafter applied to the granting of loans and annuities to aged and infirm members of the profession or their families.

I beg to add, that annual subscriptions are due on the 1st of July each year, and I earnestly join in the hope expressed by your correspondent, Mr. Lee, that at the approaching anniversary meeting every member of the association will devote a small sum as an annual subscription to the benevolent fund, as I feel persuaded that if each individual member could be made acquainted with the particulars of the numerous appeals made to the committee, or read the letters of grateful thanks addressed to them for assistance rendered, they would deem it their greatest privilege and highest gratification to be enabled, in the smallest degree, to contribute to such a truly benevolent object.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
WILLIAM CONOLLY,
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer to the
Benevolent Fund.

Castleton-house, near Cheltenham,
May 19, 1843.