prevent water passing through them from the ventricles, when water was poured into them, the heart being inverted, and the ventricles having been laid open (but it could not be doubted but that a considerable regurgitation took place through these openings during life). The semi-lunar valves, both of the aorta and of the pulmonary artery, were healthy.

Abdomen.—Liver enlarged, and much congested in its venous hepatic system. Spleen, pancreas, stomach, and intestines, healthy. Kidneys congested and granular. Other parts of the urinary apparatus healthy.

MORE ROUGH NOTES FOR LORD ASHLEY.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—I have long been convinced that if the class of medical practitioners called in common parlance "union doctors" are ever to rise from their present degraded and false position, it must be by their own exertions. I, as one of that class, beg to forward to you some facts, the transmission of which the engrossing nature of professional avocations has hitherto delayed.

For the past six years I have attended the poor of an extensive district, comprising ten parishes, covering an area of 33,000 acres, and containing a population of 11,000, chiefly agricultural laborers and their families. Some months since I applied to the board of guardians for an increase of salary, making a statement, of which the following is the substance, and the correctness of which is undeniable :—

Taking the year concluded Lady-day, 1843, I found that I had attended 620 registered cases (exclusive of numerous applicants for doses of medicine, too trivial to be entered as cases of sickness). I had paid upwards of 2,500 visits, and travelled nearly 5,000 miles, in the necessary discharge of my duty. For this work I received, as salary, £90, with an additional £6 10s. for fractures and midwifery. This will be at the rate of rather above 3s. per case, and, I believe, about 4d. per mile, which remuneration (?) included cost of medicines, horse expenses, an assistant or dispenser, professional skill and responsibility, mental anxiety, and bodily wear and tear. I adduced, in support of my claim for an increase, examples from other districts, showing that the rate of payment to me was below even the usual low average, and I showed the injustice of calling upon a man to expend more than his whole day's salary upon a single case which might happen in accident or illness requiring leeches or expensive medicines.

Now, the affairs of the union to which I allude are, I believe, conducted on a less narrow scale than many, and the board of guardians numbers among its members many men of education and talent. The result, therefore, of my application was successful. Still my salary was *not* doubled—fifty pounds were *not* added to it—nor forty—nor twenty; *it was made, by the addition of ten pounds, £100 per annum.* The board unanimously acknowledged the efficient and satisfactory manner in which I had always performed the duties of medical officer, but hinted that, if I were not satisfied, and chose to resign, there were practitioners who would gladly accept my salary.

My case is not an extreme one; I *know* that many of my brethren are worse paid than myself.

I began by saying that the position of a parish surgeon is a degrading one; and while his services are thus valued and paid for—while he remains so much at the mercy of men, often ignorant of his duties—while he is liable to be pestered with messages from local authorities, and notes from Ladies Bountiful in every parish, pressing upon his particular attention some *protégé*—respectable practitioners will, if possible, avoid parochial duty, and the office will naturally devolve upon those of a less liberal education, and in an inferior position, or on young men, comparatively inexperienced.

I said that the position is a false one. I would ask, who sees the poor as they really are, as they live and eat, and sleep, and die, as does the parish surgeon? Who so fitted to point out to the liberal *deserving* objects for their bounty? Who ought to be the intermediate link between the two halves of the world, "the one who knows not how the other lives?" This link he is not, generally speaking, at present; for it is notorious that the medical man of the poor is not usually the attendant of their rich neighbours.

How, then, are these matters to be remedied? *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*, doubtless. Doctors proverbially disagree, and in nothing more than in proposing a cure for this evil. I leave to wiser heads than mine the method of cure. But I would say that the appointment of surgeon is at present too much in the power of local boards. Let such, by all means, appoint the officer; but let the salary be fixed elsewhere. At present its amount is not regulated by the nature and extent of the work required, nor by the qualifications or abilities of the person appointed, but entirely by the varying opinion and caprice of the boards. In three workhouses of equal size, of one of which I have the care, the surgeons' salaries are respectively £80, £40, and £20; and I believe the lowest salary to have the most onerous duties attached to it. This, surely, calls for revision. The duties can now, after eight or nine years' experience, be correctly ascertained; let the salary be fixed accordingly, regulated by certain variations in population and distance. Let this be done. The parochial surgeon would then be no longer classed with the over-worked and underpaid factory operatives, miners, shirt-makers, or dress-makers. Nor would he alone be benefited; his pauper patients would benefit, and assuredly the rate-payers would, in the end, be no losers.

Gentlemen, I have trespassed much on your valuable space, and I apologise for so doing. I must likewise beg your indulgence, and that of your readers, for the crude and ill-arranged manner in which I have hastily thrown these remarks together. Let me hope that you and they can see, with the poet, "sermons in stones, and *good* in everything," even in the epistle of a parish doctor.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

HENRY W. LIVETT.

Wells, Somerset, Jan. 15, 1844.