

vancement, I attended 500 cases of midwifery in twenty-three months—for nothing.

The profession owes you a large obligation, it relies on your judgment, is convinced of your integrity, and therefore may be greatly influenced by your advocacy: reconsider all the circumstances of the poor, and the condition of the profession; especially as influenced by the WHIG atrocity, the New Poor Law Amendment Act, a measure which, in the conception, stamps its contrivers as scarcely better than idiots, exceeded in fatuity only by their nose-led and selfish approvers, set about inquiring whether half-a-crown a year was not better than nothing, as it would have been in *my* case; or, still better, than 5s. or 15s. extorted by low and oppressive pseudo-judicial proceedings; or higgling for sixpences in seven-shilling accounts current; or vending powders at 3d. per dozen, and bargaining about mixtures at "the low price of one shilling?" "Reform it altogether." Yours, &c.

DELTA.

THE BRIDGWATER BOARD OF GUARDIANS AND THE MEDICAL OFFICERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—An advertisement having appeared in the *Standard*, and other papers, for medical practitioners to take charge of the Paupers of the Bridgwater Union, I shall be much obliged by your giving publicity to the following statement of facts for the information of the profession generally:—

The medical gentlemen who undertook the charge of the poor, during the last year, having found that they were considerable losers by their contracts, declined to renew them on the very low terms offered by the Board, but were willing to accept the minimum average paid throughout the kingdom. This reasonable offer was rejected by a majority of twenty-four to nineteen; two unqualified men were then appointed to a district which one surgeon had taken charge of before, and a resolution was passed to advertise for four surgeons to undertake the care of the remaining districts which the Board had determined, at a former meeting, should be divided into seven, five active surgeons having been found to be an insufficient number to perform the duties required. The medical officers have always been treated by the Guardians with marked disrespect. No representation from them, however important, has ever received the slightest attention, not even a formal acknowledgment, and the Board, finding themselves unable to awe them into submission, or compel them to accept terms which were degrading to the profession, allow themselves to be influenced by resentment and

vindictive feelings, and threaten to bring opponents into the neighbourhood. As soon as this disgraceful business is settled, the medical gentlemen intend to bring the whole affair before the public, and, in the meantime, I hope you will be so good as to insert this communication in an early Number. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. BARUCH TOOGOOD.

Bridgwater, July 3, 1837.

* * We have been unavoidably compelled to delay the publication of this letter.—
ED. L.

TERMS OF SCIENCE IN NATURAL HISTORY.

PRESERVATION OF SKINS, &c.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I herewith enclose a letter transmitted to me by my friend Charles Waterton, Esq., of Walton-Hall, Yorkshire, on which any comments from me might be considered presumptuous, as it carries with it, most pointedly, its own justification. I cannot avoid remarking, however, that the researches of this student of nature appear, in my humble opinion, to be of infinitely more value than those of all the cabinet or closet naturalists, with all their parade of ephemeral arrangements and affected nomenclature, their pedantry and work with lexicons, murdering the Greek for the manufacture of absurd and barbarous terms, and all this with the view of imposing an air of novelty on worthless compilations. When such affected jargon and mummery, misnamed science, shall have given place to truth and reason, then, doubtless, will be read with delight the graphic descriptions Mr. Waterton has given from careful observation amidst the deep and sombre retreats of the South American forests.

What this author has remarked on the habits of the American vulture (as well as of other animals) I know to be correct. The bird here mentioned is certainly guided to its food, not merely by the eye but by the sense of smell, as are most insects and many other animals.*

I can well say thus much of Mr. Waterton's labours, having, in South America, witnessed his zeal and assiduity in acquiring a knowledge of animals in their native haunts. Such acquisitions form the genuine naturalist, and too often excite the envy of those who are less informed, and affect to condemn what is altogether beyond their reach. It is to be hoped that many *virtuosi* will receive

* This appears to be, in some degree, anatomically corroborated, from a dissection of one of these birds, as stated in a paper read at a late meeting of the Zoological Society by Mr. Lesler, who observed a remarkable development of its olfactory organs.