

before Mr. Roebuck's Committee, this gentleman stated that Dr. Spence, President of a Committee sent out by Dr. Andrew Smith to Constantinople and Balaklava to report specially on the Military Hospitals, was Dr. Smith's son-in-law. Thereby insinuating that no impartial report could be expected from so near a relation. I observe that Dr. Smith has publicly contradicted this untruth. The Director General has no child, and my intimate and excellent friend Spence, who was well known to several persons in this city, and perished in the *Prince* at Balaklava, died a bachelor.

The superiority of every thing French over every thing English in the Turkey expedition is uniformly asserted by these writers, and dilated on with much apparent zest. This appears to be at present a popular theme in the newspapers, and the state of the French Hospitals is triumphantly referred to in proof of its truth, relative to the Medical Department. It is probable enough that, considering the earlier establishment of the French Hospitals at Scutari, and the other advantages they possessed, as above noticed, and the fewer admissions into them, when the British Hospitals were formed, the comparison may at first have been favorable to our gallant allies, but I suspect this is no longer the case.

I can assert with confidence that the superiority was on the other side during the Peninsular campaign. In 1814, after the battle of Orthes, a French Hospital, full of wounded, was entrusted to my charge, its medical attendants having retired with the army two days before. I never witnessed any thing so bad as the state of that hospital generally, and the surgery was pre-eminently disreputable. Thirty patients had lost arms or legs— one or two an arm and leg. Of these about one-fourth had died, and most of the remaining stumps were attenuated cones, each with three or four inches of bare bone at its apex. The greater part required re-amputation to save life, the vital powers not being able to throw off the dead bone. Some thus recovered, but with difficulty.

This was in 1814; at that time out of Paris there were few Physicians or Surgeons of eminence; and I know that in the south of France it was not unusual to send a hundred leagues for a Surgeon to perform a capital operation. Things have no doubt improved much since that time, and distinguished professional men may now be found in Bourdeaux, Toulouse, Lyons, and other secondary cities. Still, I think, not in the same proportion as in towns of this class in Great Britain and Ireland.

Our Regimental Hospitals are nearly faultless, but in Military General Hospitals the anomalous and invidious position of the Purveyor is calculated to do mischief. Purveyors are Hospital Commissaries entrusted with the duty of providing food for the patients. Though nominally under the orders of the Senior Medical Officers, they are, *de facto*, the