

Wright to be thankful and grateful to Mr. Curtis for this discovery? Is such conduct as this likely to make us disbelieve the assertion of Kramer, when he says, "Wright is surpassed in the shallowness and worthlessness of his treatise only by Stevenson and Curtis."\* To Mr. Wright's advice that I should give my name, I reply that *my* object is not to advertise myself. If by writing these lines I do ever so little towards the upholding of truth and the stifling of quackery, I am satisfied. My cry is not "come and consult me—my name and address in full below." I nevertheless beg to assure Mr. Wright that I am not ashamed of my name; but until its publication will be attended by some advantage, I shall be satisfied with the initials "J. T."

In conclusion, Sir, I must, in common with the medical profession, express my regret that aural surgery is in so degraded a state in this country, that hundreds of deaf persons prefer remaining as they are, to placing themselves under the hands of aurists; and let me assure Mr. Curtis, and the numerous advertising gentlemen of his fraternity, that they, by their ignorance and cupidity, have brought the present odium upon one of the most interesting and important branches of surgery; and that they, instead of "relieving suffering humanity,"† have produced more misery than any other class of persons now living. To prove the worthlessness of such men; to expose them as a disgrace to society, and to the profession to which they pretend to belong; and, lastly, to endeavour to render aural surgery a scientific pursuit, instead of one calculated to bring discredit upon its followers, shall always continue to be the object of your obedient servant,

J. T.

## NECESSITY OF CORONERS BEING MEDICAL MEN.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR:—Had space permitted, I should certainly have subjoined some observations upon the narrative which I furnished you of the particulars of the Coroner's inquest upon a skeleton at Turnham-green, thirty years ago, just to prove how necessary it is that Coroners should know at least the A B C of anatomy. Had such been the case here, how much useless trouble had been saved to a jury of four-and-twenty persons, to say nothing of the horror and anxiety of the family whom it concerned.

Let us suppose for a moment that the Coroner had put some such questions as these to the medical man who attended:—"Are these bones male or female?" "Are they

young or old?" "Are they the bones of a tall or short person?" "How long have they been interred?" All these questions might have been readily answered, and, of course, when a young man, six feet high, was the subject of inquiry (as was the case here), the inquest would have terminated satisfactorily, at least with regard to *him*, in a few minutes.

Had the bones of the pelvis been wanting, the sexual character of the skeleton might have been clearly defined by many other peculiarities; a single thigh bone, or only its superior part, with its cervix; the sacrum alone; a single clavicle; the skull, with its thin frontal bone, without frontal sinuses; the general lightness and extended surfaces of the female skeleton, are all sufficiently explanatory to one practised in anatomy, and would in an instant suggest to a Medical Coroner the necessity of such inquiries.

If, therefore, so much information is to be acquired by a view of the *bones* alone, what shall we say of the laws of physiology and pathology, a knowledge of which is *every day* required to enable a Coroner to direct his inquiries to the effect of diseases, and the destructive nature of poisonous substances upon animal life, in which some acquaintance with chemistry is also involved?

I believe, as a set-off against all these things, that a knowledge of the law of *evidence*, so much insisted upon by the lawyers, will make but a poor figure, particularly when it is considered that it is all comprised in a small printed treatise, and may be described in a much smaller compass; and, above all, that it is a qualification never doubted, but awarded by common consent, and with the concurrence of the Lord Chief Justice himself, to any gentleman who can afford to be made a justice of peace, with the full assurance that he will learn it, with *very little tuition*, from the attorney's clerk who sits at his elbow. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

F. W. C. PERFECT.

Hammersmith, Feb. 4, 1839.

## NECESSITY OF CORONERS BEING MEDICAL MEN.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR:—The accompanying report taken from the "Times" newspaper, is of peculiar importance at the present moment, as it affords a practical proof, in addition to the many others which you so ably brought before the crowded meeting of your supporters at the Crown and Anchor, on Tuesday evening last, of the necessity for Coroners being medical men.

\* Kramer on the Ear, page 16.

† Mr. Curtis's words.