wounded feeling, that the author will excuse me, I trust, if I take no further notice of his communication.

You speak, Sir, as if my statements have been refuted. I challenge you to show me how or where. Not one fact in my address has been shaken, and if the letters of Dr. Perry and "A Member of the Medico-Chirurgical Society" afford the only ground on which you have to congratulate the profession in Glasgow, you will pardon me if I hazard the opinion that you have indeed little to offer. You remark "that it would be well if such papers as Dr. Black's were carefully considered by a committee before being read before such a Society as the Medico-Chirurgical of Glasgow," which statement, by interpretation, may signify that an exposure of professional iniquity should be suppressed, particularly if it affect some confessedly on a higher social platform, but whose love of truth cannot be greater, than mine.

The following excerpt of minute of the Proceedings of the Medico-Chirurgical Society for October 7th, 1870, was copied by me, in the presence of Dr. Perry:—"Dr. D. C. Black read a paper on Certain Aspects of Medical Reform. He discussed, at considerable length, a number of highly interesting questions affecting the profession. He directed attention to the small number of physicians and surgeons in this city who restricted their practice to consultations. He considered that the charges of some gentlemen practising among the wealthier classes were much too low; and that, as a necessary result, the younger members of the profession and those generally whose labours were among the working classes, were compelled to take exceedingly small fees. He objected to special dispensaries. He criticised the action of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons in providing gratis vaccination, and he disapproved of the system by which the medical and surgical staff of the Royal Infirmary are elected. An animated discussion followed, in which Mr. John Reid, Dr. Fleming, Dr. Lyon, Dr. Eben. Watson, Dr. Morton, Dr. Macleod, Dr. Steven, Dr. Renfrew, and the President engaged. Considerable diversity of opinion was expressed on the various subjects treated of by Dr. Black."

Relying upon your sense of justice to me,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

D. CAMPBELL BLACK, M.D.

Glasgow, November 26th, 1870.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Under the above heading I was somewhat surprised, as a member of the Glasgow Medico-Chirurgical Society, upon reading a letter in your number of the 26th inst., from Dr. Perry, the secretary, purporting to have been written "by the very general desire of office-bearers and members." If such be the fact, I have to say that, so far as I know, there was no meeting of the Society called to sanction Dr. Perry's writing in such a way, and, so far as I have learned, there was not even a meeting of the Council. Dr. Perry has, therefore, taken it upon himself to express the opinions which he gives of Dr. Black's paper on Medical Reform, entirely without the voice of the Society. If he had only kept to correcting the mistake as to the paper having been published by the "Glasgow Medical Association," and not by the Society, as represented in THE LANCET unwittingly, he would have done right, but having gone beyond that, in representing matters quite differently from what took place, I, for one, cannot help remonstrating against such one-sided conduct on the part of our senior secretary. Dr. Black's paper was well received by the great majority of the members, and the remarks made upon it by those who spoke, for the most part were corroborative of that; and the profession, generally speaking, both in the city and the west of Scotland, is loud in the praise both of the truth and spirit of the *exposé*. I am a native of Glasgow, and can speak to the state of the profession for fully forty years back. As to fees, I recollect when no medical man would have visited under one shilling; but upon my return to the city twenty-five years ago, after having practised twelve years in Fifeshire, I was quite astonished to find the profession at such a low ebb regarding fees, and that it was no uncommon thing on the part of medical men attending for sixpence in the working class districts, and the general fee to rather well-to-do, and even monied people, was only one shilling or one-and-sixpence. Since then there has been an extreme desire on the part of the general prac-

tioners to have their fees raised *pari passu* with the advance of wages, and the Glasgow Medical Association, at which Dr. Perry affects to sneer, was the first to make this attempt; and in the northern part of the town succeeded in raising the minimum fee to skilled workmen, that being now at the rate of one-and-sixpence for a continuation of ordinary visits, and fifteen shillings for midwifery. The Association consists of about twenty-four respectable members of the profession; and it has done more to raise the status, considering its limited sphere, than the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons has done, in a pecuniary way. I mention these facts to show that we are not the contemptible men Dr. Perry would lead you to suppose, but men who serve the public faithfully by night and by day, although his party has attempted to cut us up by professorial and Faculty specialism. And although he again, as assumed mouthpiece of the Society, affects to not having known of the existence of the Association, he personally and as secretary knew of it for years before he penned his present *ex parte* letter, in which he makes such questionable statements; and perhaps Dr. Perry will allow me to refresh his memory with the fact of he and his party having been communicated with when the promoters of the resuscitation and reissue of the *Glasgow Medical Journal* were remonstrated with against their doing so, under the title of the "Glasgow and West of Scotland Medical Association," thus plagiarising, with an *addendum*, our titles. I merely mention this to show that our worthy secretary cannot be so very oblivious, mentally speaking, of facts.

In conclusion, I have only to say that Dr. Black has not made a single statement in his paper which cannot be proved, even against some "Fellows of Faculty"; they are exceptional, but the facts exist, and the doings and actings of many of the said "Fellows" have been the principal causes of these facts having been brought out so prominently by him. Before closing, I cannot help stating that I have had an account challenged by a party having at least £250 a year, for having charged two shillings per visit, as compared with one of a former eminent practitioner and college professor, who, with his carriage and pair, charged only two shillings and sixpence for attending a patient for the first time of the same class as my own was then.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Glasgow, Nov. 26th, 1870.

JOHN REID, L.F.P.S.G.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The letter of Dr. Perry on the above subject in the last issue of THE LANCET has just come under my notice, and, I must say, to my great surprise and indignation.

Being a member of Council of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, I am in a position to state without fear of contradiction that Dr. Perry had no permission or authority whatever to say one word on the subject; that he has inflicted a grievous wrong on the Society, and that he has thereby made you and your readers the victims of a deception. I have also to state that Dr. Black's paper was listened to with the utmost attention, and at the conclusion received the warmest applause, and elicited less criticism than any paper read before the Society during the eighteen years I have been connected with it.

The scale of fees Dr. Perry knows, and should have told you, is, and has always been, a dead letter here; neither he nor anyone else acts up to it. It is occasionally of service in cases of dispute.

So late in the week I cannot trouble you further; but I trust for the sake of truth and justice you will find room for this in your next issue.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Glasgow, Nov. 30th, 1870.

ROBERT GRIEVE, L.R.C.S. Edin.

THE LANCET MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read with great pleasure your suggested "Medical Acts Amendment Bill," and should vastly like to see it passed the next session; but there is one of the clauses, the 29th, that might, I think, with justice to us, be slightly altered thus:—"If any person, who for gain

either practises medicine or surgery, or any branch of medicine or surgery, or is engaged in the cure or treatment of disease or injury, and is not registered under the principal Act," he shall for every such offence be liable, on summary conviction, to a penalty not exceeding £100, and in default shall be committed to the House of Correction for a period not exceeding six months. As I read your clause, the offence seems to me to be in assuming the various titles mentioned in Schedule A—not in practising medicine or surgery.

If my reading is correct, what is to prevent several individuals in my neighbourhood from practising medicine and surgery? One man keeps a druggist's shop, sells beer, groceries, ironmongery, &c., attends all the people in the district, and is medical attendant to clubs and collieries, and of course attends midwifery. He styles his shop "Medical Dispensary," sends his accounts out headed "Chemist," but has them printed "for medicine and attendance," as a qualified practitioner would have. Three others, in different directions, all without a single qualification, practise, keep open surgeries, and have "Surgery" painted on their doors. Now, unless the alteration suggested above is carried out, I think we shall be just in the same "fix" as before.

You will pardon me for saying there is one other thing wanting to make the Act complete—viz., the appointment of a Public Prosecutor, and it should be the duty of every superintendent of police to give information of any person practising medicine or surgery illegally to such prosecutor, to enable him to bring the parties to justice.

Apologising for trespassing so much on your valuable space,

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Barnsley, Nov. 27th, 1870.

VIGILANS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In responding to your invitation for criticism of your Medical Bill "from all who earnestly wish for the efficiency and repute of the profession," I wish to remark on what seems to be a serious omission.

You assert that your Bill "does for the public what the Army and Navy Boards do for the public services." Now that is what your Bill does not do. It stops short by only one step. You may say that it is better to attempt to push through Parliament such a Bill as yours at once; that it is, as nearly all will admit, a vast improvement on our present system; and that we ought to trust to greater experience for further development. So far this is true. But then it is apparent that such a Bill will settle the question only for a year or two, and that, as the House of Commons is likely to get sick of Medical Amendment Bills, it would be wise to attempt a link or two more in our chain of improvement while we are about it.

The Army and Navy Boards throw their appointments open to all licensed medical men, under certain conditions necessary for the services. They subject all to a competitive examination, and the successful candidates obtain their appointments according to their proved merits. Now how does your Bill do this for "the public." Clearly the service of the public cannot be restricted to mean simply licensing a man to practise. It includes this, but it includes a great deal more. The service of the public also exists wherever the public pays money, whether by local or general taxation, or "voluntary contributions" for hospitals dispensaries, unions, &c. Why, then, should not your Bill do for these civil public services what the Army and Navy Boards do for theirs? what the Government is now doing for all the other civil services? You argued against such a Bill, promoted by Sir John Gray, in the beginning of the year (THE LANCET, March 5th, 1870), that it would, on the one hand, be inconsistent with the convenience and dignity of a National Examining Board, and, on the other, that it was unwise and distasteful to subject men in practice to examination. First as to convenience. Well, it would undoubtedly involve trouble. It would be more convenient, in one sense, to give every appointment to the first comer, to the one with the greatest number of square feet of testimonials, to the one whose religious or political principles were in greatest accord with those of the patrons; all these ways would be more convenient. But great results require great means. Then as to dignity: would it not

add to, rather than detract from, the dignity of our Medical Council that it had delegated to it from the Crown, the corporations, and the profession, the power of regulating the competition for every civil medical appointment in the kingdom? But I think we might all be satisfied if the new board maintains an equal dignity with those boards that are already acting in a similar capacity for the army and navy. You then go on to speak of the impolicy of subjecting practitioners to a competitive examination. But the great and primary consideration is to find, for every kind of work, the man fittest to do it; and you have been unable to suggest any plan equal to that of devising tests, "at once thorough, practical, and clinical," tests varied according to the particular nature of the work required, tests to measure the mind by the special knowledge or work required, rather than to measure the testimonials, as of "Sir Scalpel Haustus," by a foot-rule.

In this way you will not only encourage the acquirement of greater knowledge after the medical threshold is crossed by the attainment of the degree, but you will have a guide towards regulating supply and demand by knowing what standard is required for obtaining the least remunerative appointments.

The limits of a letter do not permit further remarks on the few reasons against, and the overwhelming ones in favour of, such a system. I do not urge that those changes be made all at once; but rather that our Medical Council or Senate be endowed with the power of arranging and instituting them at such times and in such a way as it shall deem convenient; and thus to obviate the necessity of going back to a weary Parliament with another Bill.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. GRANT, M.D.

Honduras-terrace, Commercial-road, Nov. 28th, 1870.

FEMALE MEDICAL STUDENTS AT EDINBURGH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the perusal of your last issue, I noticed in the article concerning female students in Edinburgh, you allude to the disturbance which took place at the College of Surgeons last Friday week, which you represent rather erroneously. In the first place, you state "the male students," which may be construed by the public as meaning the majority of medical students, whereas there were not more than fifty present, and some of these did not belong to the Medical Faculty, the number of medical students in Edinburgh being between 500 and 600. In the second place, you state that the lecture could not be continued, whereas Miss Jex-Blake (one of the lady students) denied, in a letter to the *Scotsman*, that there was any great disturbance in the classroom, but, on the contrary, that the lecture was continued as usual. Finally, admitting that we have a few students here (as there are in every school) who are desirous of giving vent to their feelings, we deny that the "mobbing," as it is termed, was caused by them alone, but also by the crowd collected in the street outside the College.

Excuse me endeavouring to correct the erroneous impression which you have acquired from the report of the *Globe*, which might be damaging and detrimental for the future to the school of Edinburgh, as well as being exceedingly unpleasant to the students of 1870. I do not deny that there was a disturbance, but in every paper I have read containing an account it has been greatly exaggerated. I do not agree at all with such demonstrations against the lady students, but at the same time I do not like to see erroneous statements made concerning them.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

London-street, Edinburgh, Nov. 29th, 1870.

STUDENT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On receiving my usual copy of THE LANCET on Saturday last, I was astonished upon reading the account of the "row" here on the 19th inst. You state that after the lecture had been given up the male students mobbed the ladies down the street. (Unfortunately you specify no number.) The statement needs only to be openly denied, as being perfectly untrue.