Mr. Field, and, on his arrival, was fully prepared to deliver.

This was done without difficulty; but, immediately after, there was a great rush of air, (at the lowest computation not less than two gallons,) upon which she felt very comfortable, and the pulse became natural, but hæmorrhage almost immediately followed. I introduced my hand and brought away the placenta, which adhered strongly to the *fundus uteri*, and as the flow of blood continued unabated, I kept my hand applied to the uterus, in hopes of bringing about a contraction. Stimulants, and other means were used, but, in spite of all our efforts, she sunk within the hour. I sent for my friend Mr. Doubleday, with the intention of trying transfusion, but he arrived too late; which was, perhaps, not to be lamented, as the uterus would most probably never have contracted, and the failure of the experiment would have tended to bring that useful operation into disrepute.

Salisbury Square, June 6th.

TYRANNY OF THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

June 24, 1827.

SIR,—I desire the favour of your inserting the accompanying letters and subjoined observations, in the next Number of THE LANCET.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
EDW. HARRISON.

Copy of Dr. Harrison's Letter to Dr. Chambers.

7, Holles-street, Cavendish-square,
May 12th, 1827.

SIR,—I was not a little surprised, on my return to Quebec-street last Sunday evening, to learn that you had formally refused to meet me in consultation, because I had not received a licence to practise medicine from the London College of Physicians. As the delicate sufferer was, at the time, in the greatest possible danger, I leave you to form your own conclusions upon the humanity and propriety of declining to give assistance to an afflicted fellow creature, in compliance with a capricious and untenable by-law.

To the patient, and to myself, the determination was fortunate, because it had led the parents, before my arrival, to procure the assistance of an experienced and able physician. This gentleman has, like myself, not thought proper to apply for the College licence, and yet he assures me that the members of your Corporation do

not object to consult with him whenever their services are wanted; so true is it, that it may suit them at times to enforce the rigid observance of a by-law, and at other times to leave it entirely to individual discretion.

To enter into a minute investigation of the supposed grounds of your refusal, would lead me far beyond the limits of an ordinary letter. It will be sufficient for my present purpose to state, that neither the late Dr. Baillie, nor your colleagues Drs. Warren, Turner, or Paris, ever ventured upon such a measure when their medical services were requested along with mine; and it would, perhaps, have been more suitable to a person in your professional station to have imitated their example than to have formed a rule for yourself.

As far as concerns me individually, it is really a matter of perfect indifference whether I am in future to meet in consultation with the Fellows of your College, or am to lose their services in cases of danger or obscurity. London, happily, contains many physicians out of the pale of your Corporation, in whose skill invalids may safely confide. Under this impression, my first determination was wholly to overlook the contents of your note, addressed to the mother of my patient; but on referring to the purport of it, a few nights since, in a large party of physicians, who, in the phraseology of your College, are denominated "*alieni homines*," I became convinced of my error. Indeed, it now appears to me, that in following the bent of my inclination, I should have neglected the duty I owe to my alma mater, the University of Edinburgh, and to my brethren, the "*alien*" physicians established throughout the British dominions, as well as to the public at large.

Deeply interested in the questions at issue between the medical Graduates of England and of all other countries, I shall now call your attention to some of the reasons which have led me uniformly to resist the arrogated powers of the London College. In opposing them, I am neither influenced by hostility nor prejudice; my chief aim is to relieve myself and my brethren from the degradations imposed upon us. Among the reasons which have influenced me to adopt my present course, it will be sufficient to state—

1st. That unless I have been misinformed, every candidate for your licence is obliged, on his bended knees, to swear obedience to the laws and regulations of the College, though by a refinement in legislation, as far as I know peculiar to yourselves, he is not suffered to read them either before or after he has complied with the oath. If such be the case I cannot

help giving it as my deliberate opinion, that the ceremony is equally dishonourable to the parties who require, and to those who submit, to this preposterous exhibition.

2ndly. Another insuperable objection to the College licence is founded on your arbitrary and illegal by-laws. According to my interpretation of the medical statutes, the College of Physicians is equally open to the graduates of every University; it possesses no distinction of rank, though the highest has, by a series of encroachments, been limited to the physicians of Oxford and Cambridge, while a lower grade has been forced upon all other physicians.

These are some of the numerous objections which I feel, and which make it impossible for me, under the present constitution of the College, to apply for their licence. Should the College still be of opinion, as they formerly professed to maintain, that they can legally compel the acceptance of a licence, or the discontinuance of practice, I beg them to be assured, that I am perfectly ready to try the question whenever they may think proper to afford me the opportunity. I must, however, in the mean time, strongly remonstrate against the custom of endeavouring to obtain their object by a course injurious to medical science and prejudicial to the community. You may possibly be aware, that I formerly stated the same sentiments to Dr. Baillie, and after his death to Dr. Turner. I did not omit on either occasion to add, that the fellows were, in my opinion, highly culpable in making regulations which they dare not attempt to enforce in a court of law. As my sentiments remain unaltered, I embrace the opportunity which you have afforded me, to renew my offer through you to the College. Should the challenge be at length accepted, I pledge myself to carry the suit to a full hearing and final decision.

In repeating my offer for the third time, I desire to remind you, that I have hitherto been content to assert my own privileges and independence when they were unnecessarily assailed; but after so many provocations, I now think myself called upon openly to claim for myself and colleagues, all the rights and privileges of British subjects, agreeably to the union of the two kingdoms. To an Englishman, it appears to be more than absurd and ridiculous, that he should be supposed to have lost any of his natural rights by visiting another portion of the same kingdom, merely to qualify himself for the duties of a profession, the knowledge of which he could nowhere acquire in his own part of the country. If the fellows shall still think fit to decline the contest, an enlightened public cannot fail to appreciate their real motives, however they may be disguised or concealed.

As for the graduates of my order, they will not be slow to perceive the folly of connecting themselves with an incorporation, from which they must afterwards expect to receive only marks of neglect, of opposition, or of humiliation.

I think myself entitled, explicitly, to inquire from you on this occasion whether, in refusing to meet me in consultation, you considered yourself as acting discretionally, or under an indispensable obligation imposed on you by the by-laws of the College?

I beg leave to add, in conclusion, that unless I receive a satisfactory answer in the space of a month, either from you or the College, to the several allegations contained in this letter, I shall feel it my duty to publish it, for the information and guidance of my brethren, wherever they may be situated.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

(Signed) EDW. HARRISON.

To Dr. Chambers, Brook-street.

Copy of Dr. Chambers's Answer to Dr. Harrison's Letter.

Brook Street, May, 14th, 1827.

Sir,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 12th May, which only reached me this afternoon. I beg leave to state, that I do not feel myself called upon to enter into the discussion of the questions which you conceive to be at issue between the College of Physicians and yourself. I have only to say, as to myself, that in refusing to meet you in consultation, I acted in obedience to a positive regulation of the College, and that it is a matter of indifference to me whether you publish your letter on the subject or not.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) W. F. CHAMBERS.

To Dr. Harrison.

Although Dr. Chambers declares, that "in refusing to meet me in consultation, he acted in obedience to a positive regulation of the College," will he venture to maintain, that he has never invaded this *positive regulation*, or by-law, during his connexion with that body? I have, as already observed, been joined in practice with no fewer than four fellows, during my short residence in London. I may now add, that from Dr. Chambers alone have I encountered a refusal. I have also said, that the alien physician, an old metropolitan practitioner, who supplied the doctor's place, is in the constant habit of meeting the fellows professionally. After stating these facts, I shall not expatiate further upon the

glaring incongruities and absurdities of the fellows, but leave them to explain their motives, and to form their own justification.

2ndly. Do the fellows ever decline to consult with surgeons, on cases strictly medical? Physicians had formerly the whole management of constitutional diseases intrusted to them, and were also applied to as the dernier resort in surgery. But so completely are the tables now turned in these respects, that while the surgeon openly beards the doctor in medical practice, he is jealous of the smallest encroachment upon his own department: many examples of recent date might be given in support of these assertions. As regards the former, the reader cannot have forgotten, that two individuals of the highest medical and surgical rank, were lately in conjoint attendance for several successive weeks, upon two distinguished and very exalted characters. One of the cases was purely medical, and the surgical treatment of the other was so inconsiderable, that the surgeon could only be wanted for his medical skill.

3dly. According to present usage in this country, the ordinary practice of physic is almost entirely confided, in the first instance, to the family apothecary. The physician is only thought of when the case becomes alarming or tedious. After his introduction, their visits are continued in accordance, and the two share the responsibility between them.

4thly. Upon what justifiable grounds then, can the Fellows refuse to be united in consultation with the "independent physician," whilst they have no hesitation in freely consulting with the surgeon and apothecary?

5thly. In a colloquial discussion with the late Dr. Baillie, so long ago as the month of June, 1821, while we were engaged upon the case of a young lady, I fully explained my opinion of the London College of Physicians, as alluded to in my letter to Dr. Chambers. This was the third patient, after my arrival in London, who had called for our joint assistance. As the doctor had never omitted, on former occasions, to recommend any application for the College licence, I determined, at this interview, if a good opening occurred, to assign my reasons for declining to comply with his urgent solicitations. The opportunity being given, I avowed it as my deliberate conviction, arising from legal inquiries and a careful investigation of the subject,

1. That the College of Physicians is, according to the laws of the realm, and charter of King Henry the VIII, equally open to the medical graduates of every University. I added, that it was, in point of fact, conducted upon this principle from the first establishment in 1523—4, to about the

middle of the last century, including a period of more than two hundred years.

2. That at this eventful era, a predominant party of Oxford and Cambridge Physicians, unfortunately for medical science, and the true interests of their profession, had the temerity to narrow the by-laws, in order to promote their own selfish views. On referring to the exact time when these regulations were enacted, we are led to believe, that they were chiefly intended, to check the rising prosperity of the University of Edinburgh. Had the College formed their excluding by-laws anterior to the British union, something might perhaps have been advanced in extenuation of their conduct; though, inasmuch as the healing art is the production of no particular soil, it would be absurd to attempt to confine its cultivation within the limits of any district. But no sooner were the two nations consolidated into one kingdom, than it became the bounden duty of every citizen to efface local distinctions, and promote harmony through the land.

3. That the College was extremely culpable in making by-laws, which they durst not endeavour legally to enforce.

4. That it was due to themselves and to the physicians of my order, either to try the validity of their present regulations, or to make such as they would be able to defend.

6. That fully satisfied with the stability of my own position, I was ready, whenever the College were pleased to attack my station, to defend it with legal and constitutional weapons.

Such was the purport of my conference with Dr. Baillie, at our last interview, and a similar though less extended conversation, took place in the year 1824, between Dr. Turner and myself. Having subsequently been met in consultation, both by Drs. Paris and Warren, judge of my surprise, on receiving a positive refusal, in the person of Dr. Chambers!

VACANCY AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S.

TO SIR JAMES SHAW, BART. PRESIDENT;
ROWLAND STEPHENSON, ESQ. TREASURER;
The Nobility and Gentry, Governors of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,—Previous to the Letter which I had the honour to submit to your consideration on the 8th instant,* I had addressed a communication to

* By an error, this circular is dated June 1st; but the twopenny post mark and delivery prove it was not issued before the 8th.