current views of the great body of memorialists, I take it no difference of opinion can exist.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

BELL FLETCHER, *Chairman,*
Birmingham, Nov. 8th. Senior Physician to the General Hospital.
To John Simon, Esq., F.R.S., Medical Officer to the Privy Council.

7, Waterloo-street, Birmingham, July 10th, 1869.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward you a copy of a memorial which I presented to the General Medical Council on Wednesday last. That memorial has now received the signatures of 7080 (seven thousand and eighty) qualified medical and surgical practitioners in the three kingdoms. During the past week the daily average of assents received has been nearly 500, and I have reason to believe that in the course of the ensuing week the memorial will have received the signatures of upwards of 9000 qualified practitioners.

The memorial was determined upon at a meeting of which I was the chairman, held in the Council-room of the Institute on the 17th ult., several days before your communication to the President of the Medical Council touching the amendment of the Medical Acts was made known. I am anxious to call your attention to that date to prove that, on totally independent grounds, those who have signed the memorial, to the extent of many thousands, have arrived at the same conclusion as the President of the Council and yourself, that the Medical Act stands in need of comprehensive amendment.

I am charged with the presentation of a duplicate of the memorial enclosed to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department; and as I do not doubt that, before introducing the desired Bill into Parliament, Her Majesty's Government will ask your opinion upon it, I have deemed it incumbent upon me to acquaint you with the views of the memorialists whom I am charged to represent.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

BELL FLETCHER.

To this communication Mr. Simon forwarded a courteous reply.—B. F.

OZONIC ETHER AS A REMEDY IN DIABETES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your issue of the 13th of March contains a letter from Dr. Pavy "On the Alleged Efficacy of the Peroxide of Hydrogen and Ozonic Ether as Remedial Agents in Diabetes Mellitus," in which he endeavours to prove, by a rather formidable array of figures, that my views regarding the destruction of sugar in the blood of diabetics by the oxidising agency of ozonic ether are altogether incorrect and untenable.

Dr. Pavy quoted a passage from my paper "On the Use of Etherial Solution of Peroxide of Hydrogen (the correct name for ozonic ether) as a Remedy in Diabetes," published in THE LANCET for Jan. 11th, 1868. Not expecting that the subject would excite much attention, I did not, I fear, sufficiently explain my views regarding the chemical changes which occur when peroxide of hydrogen is thrown into the circulation, as it rapidly is when given in the form of ozonic ether.

According to the teachings of Schönbein, peroxide of hydrogen consists of water and antozone ($\text{HO} + \text{Antozone}$); and he believes that blood-globules, when brought into contact with peroxide of hydrogen, possess the property of transforming its antozone into ozone. Now, assuming these views to be correct, and I confess to a firm belief in them, it is evident that Dr. Pavy's calculations are based on false premises; for it isozone, or oxygen in a state of exalted activity, and not atmospheric or neutral oxygen, which is liberated in the blood. Moreover, it is highly probable that the presence of sugar in the blood gives rise to morbid irritability of the sympathetic, and consequent contraction of the capillaries—a condition which would account for the chilly state of the body so constantly complained of by diabetic patients.

Now, ozonic ether, as prepared by Mr. Robbins, is a compound of absolute ether and peroxide of hydrogen (thirty

volumes); and I believe that indirectly the ether itself very materially assists in promoting oxidation of the sugar in diabetes. 1st. By virtue of its anodyne properties, it probably allays the irritable condition of the sympathetic, and thus favours the process of oxidation by relaxing the capillaries. 2nd. From some experiments I have recently been trying, I have reason to believe that, at the temperature of the body, ether, when combined with water, possesses the property of chemically acting on atmospheric or neutral oxygen, and of converting a portion of it into ozone and antozone. However, these are points on which I do not presume to speak with any degree of confidence.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN DAY, M.D., M.R.C.S. E.

Yara-street, Geelong, Victoria, May 22nd, 1869.

ON MECHANICAL ASSISTANCE DURING LABOUR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—After your report of the proceedings of the Obstetrical Society, in THE LANCET of October 16th, I am surprised to see, in the last number of your journal, that Dr. Woodward persists in adopting as his own idea peculiar advantages which I had enumerated and claimed for an instrument exhibited by me at the same Society four months ago.

Having pointed out, both publicly and privately, in Dr. Woodward's presence, that his invention, however efficient as a "back-supporter," could not accomplish the objects which my "pelvic band" effects, I certainly am astonished to find that he still adopts them.

This he has done without reference to me, and almost in the very terms I employed in July in describing the advantages of my instrument, at the meeting of the Obstetrical Society, and subsequently before the British Medical Association at Leeds.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

PROTHEROE SMITH.

Park-street, Grosvenor-square, Nov. 8th, 1869.

BIRMINGHAM.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE Birmingham guardians are again in trouble with the Poor-law Board. The relations between the two bodies have not been happy for some time; and this is not surprising, considering that the guardians have a way of deciding upon important measures without obtaining the consent of the authorities at Whitehall. Early in the year, the number of parish surgeons was reduced in this independent fashion, and the reduction is still unconfirmed. More recently, the guardians decided that it was necessary to provide accommodation for double the present number of male epileptic inmates, and forthwith they obtained plans and took steps to erect the necessary buildings. The Poor-law Board have just refused to authorise the outlay for these buildings, for the very sufficient reason that room can be made for all the epileptic inmates by a less expensive plan than the erection of a new building to accommodate 200 male epileptics, while the average number of male and female cases in the house does not exceed 170. At this rate, the local government would prove an expensive luxury, if no central government existed. While thus lavish with their funds in one direction, the guardians are creating a new difficulty by their economy in another. Early in the year, the office of public vaccinator was created, and Dr. Robinson, for many years resident medical officer of the workhouse, was appointed. At the time it was estimated that the fees would amount to some £500 per annum, but experience has shown that this estimate was too high, and that the income cannot for many years reach that sum. Under these circumstances, Dr. Robinson has very naturally asked the guardians to bear the expenses of the vaccination stations; but at present they have not done so, although the Poor-law Board, at the time of the appointment, considered that such expenses should fall on the guardians. The non-appointment of an