secondly, whenever decided rigidity complicates a labour, we may suspect the pre-existence of cervical disease; and, on the recovery of the patient—say six weeks after the confinement, the condition of the uterine organs should be ascertained, and, if any disease is discovered, it should be treated and removed. I may add, that the treatment of rigidity of the os during labour, from chronic inflammatory disease, is the same as that of rigidity from other causes. Patience and time are, however, still more necessary. Tissues indurated by chronic inflammation must dilate slowly and painfully.

While on the subject of uterine inflammation, I may, perhaps, be allowed to make a few other remarks. In the Hospital "Mirror" of THE LANCET there have been published, during the last few months, several cases of menstruation during pregnancy, which have been given as illustrating the not unfrequent occurrence of this phenomenon. Now, in none of those cases was the state of the cervix uteri examined; and yet, without such an examination, how is it possible to say that the show of blood does not proceed from some ulcerative condition of the uterine neck? In nearly all the cases of the kind that I have seen during the last twenty years—cases in which there was a regular periodical monthly show, and in which a specular examination has been made,—I have found such disease. That a monthly discharge of blood should take place during pregnancy, when the cervix is ulcerated, can be easily understood; for it is generally admitted that the menstrual molimen still continues to take place, especially in the early months of the pregnancy, although in a very modified manner. If, therefore, there is an abraded, ulcerated surface at the cervix, it is not surprising that in some exceptional instances blood should be exuded. These menstrual fluxes during pregnancy are, under such circumstances, to all intents and purposes, hæmorrhages: they generally indicate ulcerative disease, and they require the treatment of the disease when it exists. The duty of the medical attendant, therefore, when his patient has periodical shows during pregnancy, is to examine the condition of the uterine organs. If he finds, as I generally do, that the presumed menstrual discharge is merely an exudation of blood from an ulcerated surface, he may conclude that the safety of the pregnancy is thereby endangered, and that the best thing he can do for his patient's welfare and for that of her burden is to treat and cure the inflammatory disease with as little loss of time as possible: that effected, he will find that the flux ceases of itself.

Lastly, in the history of various cases of fibrous polypus removed by operation, which have been lately narrated in the same department of THE LANCET, it has been stated that the patients were dismissed as cured, but it does not appear that the condition of the cervix was examined previous to their dismissal. Such a procedure, however, ought to be invariably adopted. In the great majority of such cases, as I mentioned in the second edition of my work on Uterine Inflammation many years ago, the presence of a polypus in the cervical canal generally coincides with the existence of severe and extended inflammatory lesions, which it probably produces in most cases. Unless these lesions are detected and cured after the removal of the polypus, the recovery of the patient is only partial. Aches, pains, and discharges, with impaired health, continue to be her portion.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,
Grosvenor-street, Dec. 1858. J. HENRY BENNET, M.D.

DIPHTHERIA.

[LETTER FROM MR. HUGH GEORGE.]
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—During the last few months I have had more than a hundred cases of diphtheria, and have noticed some peculiarities not mentioned by your correspondents. Many suffered from severe stabbing pains in the ears, and in three, after their recovery, there has been inability to read ordinary type, which continued for several weeks, as well as dysphagia. Where only one side of the throat has been attacked, it is generally the left. The disease has returned, in a few instances, in a month or two after convalescence, occasioned apparently by exposure to damp. I cannot agree with Mr. Stephens (THE LANCET, Nov. 13th), when he says that "he has not been able to detect any vesicles on these spots preceding the formation of the crusts." In several of my patients the whole or part of the soft palate has been of a deep-red, and covered with small vesicles, and, in twelve or twenty-four hours afterwards, the deposit has commenced. As to treatment, a calomel purge, the sesquichloride of iron, and tincture of calumba, of each twenty drops every three or four hours; gargles of

chlorinate of soda every hour, and the application of Beaufoy's solution of chlorinate of soda, twice or oftener daily, according to the severity of the case, beef-tea, wine, &c., I have found to be most successful.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Revesby, Lincolnshire, Dec. 1358. HUGH GEORGE, M.R.C.S.

[LETTER FROM DR. ALFRED CRAEB.]
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case appears so nearly to coincide with the one from your Twickenham correspondent, in THE LANCET of the 4th inst., that I venture to trespass on your valuable space. A few weeks since I attended two children with scarlet fever in a tradesman's family in this town. They recovered; and I had ceased to attend for a fortnight, when I was again sent for on the 30th ult., to see a lad fourteen years of age, who, I was informed, had been taken ill in the throat two days prior. The moment I entered the bed-room, I noticed the livid aspect of countenance. There was extensive ulceration of the throat, great depression, but no rash perceptible. I gave an unfavourable opinion, adopted a supporting plan, but the lad died the next day. The delay of two days before getting medical aid favoured the extension of mischief. Altogether, this appears to me to have been a well-marked case, such as was alluded to by your correspondent, of "masked scarlet fever."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Poole, December, 1858. ALFRED CRAEB, M.D.

THE POWERS GIVEN TO THE PROFESSION BY THE NEW MEDICAL ACT,

AND THE

USES OF MEDICAL REGISTRATION ASSOCIATIONS.

[LETTER FROM DR. W. THORN.]
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have carefully looked over our Medical Act, as well as the 11th and 12th Victoria, chapter 43, and I wish to call the attention of the profession and the various Registration Associations to the following conclusions I have deduced therefrom:—

- 1st. That we are now a body of registered persons.
- 2nd. That as such registered persons we have acquired certain legal rights.
- 3rd. That any unregistered person infringing upon our rights in any way whatever is liable to a prosecution before the justices, and can be imprisoned or fined at their discretion.

Now, Sir, my first conclusion is this. We are now, exactly like the attorneys and solicitors, a duly-registered body; and how do they act? If any one attempts to infringe upon their rights, either at home or abroad, they immediately put the law in motion against such offender, and so completely put down all practice by unregistered persons. Therefore I contend that the law is now strong enough to suppress all practice carried on by unregistered persons, whether herbalists, chemists, or druggists, *et hoc genus omne*. I maintain that it will be in vain for such to say that they do not visit, and are therefore not acting illegally. I say that the law will only allow what it does to a suitor—viz., anyone may *himself* prosecute his own action, whether in the county or the superior courts; but he cannot employ an unqualified—i. e., an unregistered—agent to do so for him. If he employs one at all, that one must be an attorney or solicitor—i. e., a registered person. Now, I say that the law does only allow a sick man, if he choose, to go into any chemist's shop or herbalist's emporium, and call for any item of physic he may wish; but if an unregistered person, behind the counter, *prescribes* any medicine for such man, whether at home or abroad, then, by a parity of reasoning, I maintain that he has employed an *unqualified* agent, which agent is liable to the penalties for *acting as*, although he may not have *pretended to be*, a registered person; and the person prescribed for can be the informer and witness against such illegal practitioner. So positive am I that this is the common-sense view of the question, that I am quite prepared to try the case with the first unqualified person I may be able to get up the requisite evidence against. I am sure that no magistrate will allow for a moment that a man who is unqualified, uneducated, and unregistered, can be permitted to *sit even in his own house* to practise as a physician, surgeon, or general practitioner, and to give advice and prescribe medicine for gain. His means of doing mischief are the same at home as they would be abroad, and

therefore I feel certain he would be forbidden to use them; for if he cannot practise in one place, how can he in another?

2nd.—That, as registered persons, we have acquired certain legal rights. What can this mean but that all unregistered persons are now compelled to strip themselves of any pre-assumed powers they have ventured to take upon themselves? They have *now* no legal rights; therefore, if they act like registered persons, they will be acting illegally, and must be punished accordingly. I think, therefore, that I have proved my

3rd conclusion.—That any unregistered person infringing upon our rights in any way whatever is liable to prosecution. These, Sir, are in my opinion the grand uses of our Registration Associations—namely, not only that we shall assist the Registrar so that no unqualified person shall get upon the Register, but also that we shall protect the public and ourselves from the illegal practice of medicine and surgery by unregistered and therefore unqualified pretenders. I say that we have power enough to prevent illegal practice *now*, and I trust that we shall use the power which we now possess.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Harrow-road, Paddington, Dec. 1858.

WM. THORN, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I rejoice to see the formation of Medical Registration Associations becoming so general throughout the kingdom. These societies once fairly established in every town of importance, their functions might be considerably extended, and they could be made a most powerful organ in forwarding the interests of the profession. They might become the means of supplying what has been so long wanting to enable us to assume our proper status in society—namely, combination and organization. Did a parliamentary measure, for example, require support or opposition, meetings could readily be called, the secretaries of each branch association could be in speedy communication, and the signature of almost every member of the profession be obtained to any desirable petition. For these associations are, or will be, joined by all in their neighbourhood—a result secured not only by their primary object, but by the smallness of the subscription and the absence of any cumbrous machinery; they would, in fact, become a means by which the sense of the great bulk of the profession might be at once taken on any subject (Poor-law Medical Reform, for instance,) involving their interests or welfare.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Dec. 1858.

AN HON. SECRETARY.

THE NEW SYDENHAM SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have much pleasure in answering the questions put by "A Member of the New Sydenham Society," in your journal of last week, as to what books he will receive for his first year's subscription, and when they will be ready. No. 1—Diday on Hereditary Syphilis—is within a few sheets finished printing, and will in all probability be in his hands within a month. No. 2—Selected Memoirs on Diphtheria, including a large part of Bretonneau's work, and portions of the Essays of Buchut, Daviot, and Trousseau—he may expect in about two months. Probably about the same time he will receive also No. 3, which in one volume will comprise Kussmaul and Tenner's monograph on the Effects of Profuse Bleeding upon the Nervous System, and those of Wagner on the Resection of Bones and Joints, and of Græfe on Iridectomy in the Treatment of Glaucoma and Recurring Iritis (two distinct essays). The production of No. 4, in which are numerous highly-finished engravings, will probably require a somewhat longer time. The volume will contain (bound in one) the two works of Schroeder Van der Kolk on the Nervous System. The title of the first of these is, "On the Anatomy and Physiology of the Spinal Cord;" that of the second "On the Medulla Oblongata, and on the Proximate Cause and Rational Treatment of Epilepsy." With this volume, the issue for the year 1859 will probably conclude, and I hope that not more than four months of that year will have expired before they are all out.

Respecting Gooch's book, I may state that it has been deferred a few months on account of circumstances over which the Council had no control.

Wagner's pamphlet has been translated for the Society by Mr. J. Holmes, and appended to it will be a short Appendix

by that gentleman, giving a *résumé* of such facts as have been recorded since its publication.

It is upon the selection of works for future years that the votes collected from the members generally will bear. All the above, including those of Professor Schroeder Van der Kolk, were in preparation before the results of the voting were known. Your correspondent, therefore, indulges in pure perverseness when he states that the latter books were selected in spite of their having received but a small number of votes.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JONATHAN HUTCHINSON, *General Secretary.*

Finsbury-circus, Dec. 7th, 1858.

NEW ARMY WARRANT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Soon after the issue of the Royal Warrant relating to the surgeons of the army, the surgeons of Margate addressed the following letter to General Peel, to which he returned the accompanying answer; and if you think that they may with propriety be published, and that the first letter may tend to promote a more general expression of feeling on the part of the members of our profession, they are both at your disposal.

I remain, Sir, sincerely yours,

GEORGE YEATES HUNTER, F.R.C.S.E.,

Margate, Dec. 1858.

Mayor of Margate.

(COPY.)

To General J. Peel, K.C.B. and Secretary of War.

Margate, Oct. 25th, 1858.

SIR,—We, the undersigned surgeons of Margate, desire most respectfully to inform you that we have read with pleasure and approbation the Royal Warrant of the 1st of October, regulating the future pay and rank of the army surgeons.

Although we, Sir, being civilians, are not *directly* affected by that Warrant, so creditable to the Government and so pregnant with important results, yet, believing that a measure which raises the standard of the profession, while it confers proper distinctions upon and improves the social standing of one of its branches, is *indirectly* calculated to be beneficial to the whole, we venture to offer you our warm and grateful thanks for the rewards and honours which are by that Warrant so justly bestowed upon, and in such a generous and liberal spirit offered to, our brethren the army surgeons—a body of men of whom we are proud to record that, fearless of danger, regardless of personal risk, and unmindful of neglect, they have, surrounded by difficulties, cheerfully and calmly gone forth, amid the clash of arms and the carnage of war, to render upon the battle-field prompt assistance to the wounded, the suffering, and the maimed; and have, by conduct so self-denying and so noble, earned for themselves the thanks of the Queen and the gratitude of the country, and achieved a reputation for skill and humanity which no time can destroy.

We remain obediently yours,

GEORGE YEATES HUNTER, F.R.C.S.E.,
Mayor of Margate.

DAVID PRICE, F.R.C.S.E.

HENRY GEORGE HOFFMAN, M.R.C.S.E.

A. WILLEY, M.R.C.S.E.

WM. HENRY THORNTON, M.R.C.S.E.

WM. PRESTON PRICE, M.R.C.S.E.

WM. BOLD ATKINSON, M.R.C.S.E.

OWEN ALBERT PHILIP, M.R.C.S.E., L.S.A.

GEORGE MAYRIS PITTOCK, M.R.C.S.

FREDERICK CHAMBERS, M.D.

(COPY.)

War-Office, Nov. 3rd, 1858.

SIR,—I am directed by Secretary Major-General Peel to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 25th ultimo, expressing the pleasure and approbation with which you and certain other gentlemen, surgeons at Margate, whose names are thereto subscribed, have read the Royal Warrant of the 1st of October, regulating the future pay and rank of the army surgeons.

Major-General Peel desires me to return his thanks to you for that communication; I am, however, to add, that he had only the satisfaction of carrying out the recommendation of a Committee presided over by Mr. Sidney Herbert on this matter.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

To G. Y. Hunter, Esq.

H. K. STOCKS.