

mation as could be procured periodically from private practitioners, who would be, no doubt, willing to keep a list of their cases in a prescribed form, and supply returns for moderate fees. In Scotland the registration of births is very properly made compulsory, and there the Vaccination Act is worked with the greatest rigour; but as, unlike the English Act, it contains no provision for the verification of success, I cannot help concluding, from the numbers returned, that in Scotland "vaccination" and "successful vaccination" are often used as convertible terms. In Scotland the Registrar-General was probably consulted, and the whole apparatus and expense of "registers of successful vaccination" books is got rid of; the certificate is sent to the registrar of the birth, who writes simply "vaccinated as per certificate, dated May 30th, 1866," in his birth register. That works in Scotland, but in the large districts of England it would be more difficult, in consequence of the birth registers passing quickly into the hands of the superintendent registrar. And to enable you to trace all the children it would be necessary to write off those who died, as well as those vaccinated with or without result. The simplest course is undoubtedly to abolish the "registration of successful cases" altogether, to save the expense, and to free the practitioners of the kingdom from the onerous grant of certificates of no value, enforced by vexatious penalties: trusting for information, on the one hand, to the registers of the public vaccinators, supplemented by private records; and, on the other, to inspection of the arms of children for marks. It is evident that no one in his senses would propose to prosecute the parents of all the children whose vaccination was not registered; for only a few would be selected as examples, on well-considered grounds, about whose conviction there could be no difficulty.

I am not prepared to deny the force of what Dr. Seaton has stated about the possible influence of the registrars; but hitherto they have been badly treated under the Act, and have just grounds of complaint against its injustice. I need not say that, in suggesting the abolition of the useless parts of the Vaccination Bill, I do not intend to call in question the value of the services of Mr. Simon or of Dr. Seaton and his colleagues in promoting and improving our system of vaccination.

I will now read briefly what the Registrar-General has proposed for the improvement of the measure before Parliament. He proposes to omit the register and its attendant certificates; to give notices to parents through the registrars; and to supply forms to medical men gratuitously; leaving parents liable to prosecution for neglecting the vaccination of their children, and boards of guardians to select the requisite number of cases for prosecution.

## Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

### THE REGISTRATION OF COLONIAL DEGREES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There seems to be amongst the members of the General Medical Council and the profession at large a very proper disposition to admit to the Register the names of persons who possess foreign or colonial degrees, provided that the licensing body granting the degree satisfies the Medical Council that its recipient has undergone such a course of study and examination as "guarantees the possession of sufficient knowledge and skill for the efficient practice of medicine and surgery." This is simply justice to foreigners desirous of practising in England, and also to many Englishmen who hold foreign diplomas, though there are probably very few but have an English qualification as well.

My object in writing this letter is not to advocate justice and liberality towards foreigners *only*, but to suggest that the Medical Council in their deliberations on this subject should not forget that in one foreign country at least—France—the Englishman is not permitted to practise without undergoing an examination. It certainly would be advisable that the Council should take some steps whereby the same liberality may be obtained for the Englishman desirous of practising in foreign countries that is accorded to the foreign resident in England. A kind of "reciprocity treaty" might be entered

into, under certain conditions, with those countries whose university degrees are admitted to the English Register.

The advantages of any relaxation of the Medical Act in this direction should not, I think, be *entirely* on the side of the holders of foreign degrees. Your obedient servant,

GEORGE F. HELM, M.A. Cantab., F.R.C.S.

Rugby, June 3rd, 1867.

### UNIVERSITIES AND MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The article on "Universities and Medical Practitioners" in last week's LANCET will, I trust, rouse the profession to work for a much-needed reform in the requirements of the universities. No man worthy of the degree of M.D. would wish the examinations to be anything but rigorous, and many would welcome such a change as you indicate.

"The St. Andrews Medical Graduates' Association," the formation of which you noticed last week, has at present full occupation for its energies in the alteration of the clause in the new Scotch Reform Bill, which excludes from the franchise all Doctors of Medicine of the University of St. Andrews, except the very small number who have attended classes in the University or have graduated since 1863; but I trust, that work being accomplished, it will address itself to the task of effecting such a reform of the regulations of the University, as, while testing in the most stringent manner the qualifications of candidates for its degrees, will not limit the admissions of non-resident graduates to ten in each year.

As you justly observe, it is not the severity of the examination which is prohibitory, but the necessity for residence during term, or, as in the case of the University of London, the requirement of attendance on lectures and hospital practice during the intervals between the different examinations for the degrees.

I am not empowered to speak for the Association, I am merely uttering my own sentiments, but I have reason to believe that your article represents the views of the other officers also, and to hope that before long the Association will move actively in this matter.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

LEONARD W. SEDGWICK, M.D.,

Hon. Sec. St. Andrews Medical Graduates' Association.]

Gloucester-terrace, Hyde-park, June 3rd, 1867.

### MATRICULATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me to call your attention to an advertisement which appeared in the *Philosophical Magazine* for April, respecting which some explanation seems desirable. It is headed "University College: June Matriculation Examination of the University of London;" and announces a course of Chemistry by Professor Williamson, F.R.S., assisted by Mr. C. H. Gill, F.C.S.,—the course to consist of about twenty lessons in Practical Chemistry, and as many oral lessons. The fee is mentioned. A reference to the Calendar shows that Professor Williamson is the gentleman who will *examine* in Chemistry at the June matriculation of the University of London. Were I about to matriculate, I should certainly enter the Professor's class, and should be disposed indeed to think that anyone who did not avail himself of this convenient arrangement deserved rejection. But this is from the student's point of view, which is perhaps somewhat prejudiced. The Senate of the University is probably not aware that intending candidates for matriculation from all sides are thus invited to enter the class of their future examiner. Or is this a plan by which it is sought to mitigate the well-known severity of the University examinations?

I am, Sir, your very obedient servant.

June, 1867.

INQUIRER.

DUBLIN.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

A YEAR memorable in the annals of the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland, was brought to a close by the annual elections held yesterday in its board room. Memorable inasmuch