"A second Supplemental Charter, in 1852, removed some restrictions and disqualifications, made changes in the election and tenure of office of members of the Council and Court of Examiners; empowered the Council to admit to the fellowship, without examination, on certain conditions, members of several years' standing, also to admit as fellows and Members of the College those of the corresponding grades in the other corporate bodies. It authorized the institution of a Board of Examiners in Midwifery, to hold its sittings in the College, thus supplying a deficiency which had long been the subject of complaint. This Board has since performed its functions regularly with advantage to the public, and the full approbation of the profession.

"Thus the College had two duties to perform—viz., the examination of candidates for their diploma and midwifery under the charter, and the management of the Hunterian collection.

"They have endeavoured, and they believe with success, to improve medical education by requiring of candidates, before admission to examination, evidences of study in the various branches of medical knowledge, both scientific and practical, by altering and enlarging their regulations on this subject in proportion to the increased opportunities afforded by the great hospitals and medical schools of London.

"When the corporation left the Old Bailey it was low in repute, and equally so in purse. The number of examinations in the year was inconsiderable, and the diploma, being little thought of, was not sought for by the surgical profession generally. Since that time, as the Council has always contained amongst its members the most eminent surgeons in London, the membership of the College has been constantly rising in public estimation, and has never stood higher than at the present moment. The diploma not being required by law as a qualification for practice, they who seek it come to the College voluntarily, finding it essential to the respectability of their professional character, and thus the number of persons annually examined by the College exceeds those who present themselves before any other licensing body in the United Kingdom. The whole of this duty, which involves voluminous correspondence, and gives constant employment to a secretary, clerks, and other attendants, is performed without any expense to the public.

"To the Hunterian collection the College has added more than twice the original number of specimens, thus raising its museum to the dignity of a national collection, in which light it is regarded and fully appreciated throughout the world of science. Nothing even approaching to it in extent or value is known to exist elsewhere. The boundless stores of information which are here accumulated on the structure of living beings throughout the whole range of creation, and on the changes produced in animal organs by disease, are here studied to the greatest advantage by the help of elaborate scientific catalogues, formed by the ablest men in the several departments, and filling more than twenty quarto printed volumes. These important objects have been accomplished at the sole expense of the College.

"Towards the expense of buildings for displaying the treasures of this great national collection Parliament has voted at different times three sums of money, amounting collectively to £40,000. In addition to this, the College has expended from its own funds more than £200,000 in buildings and fittings, in additions to the collection, in the formation and printing of catalogues, in the remuneration of scientific conservators, and of a necessarily numerous staff of attendants. The annual expense, at this time, of keeping up the museum in its present enlarged state is not less than £2500.

"The Council has collected the best medical library in England, consisting of nearly 30,000 volumes, of which there are both alphabetical and classed printed catalogues. It is open daily to members of the Profession and other scientific persons, with the attendance of an intelligent librarian, well versed in medical literature and acquainted with modern languages.

"Several years ago, in order to encourage young members to study more seriously and for a longer time the scientific part of the profession, the Council established studentships, with a salary of £100 per annum, to be held for two or three years, and two or three such students have been constantly working in the museum since that time.

"One of the conservators has gradually added to the museum an immense collection of microscopic objects, chiefly with the vessels injected, calculated to show the minute structure of all tissues and organs, not only in man, but throughout the entire series of animals. This interesting department of anatomy and physiology has been amply illustrated, by the

aid of numerous powerful microscopes, in an annual course of between twenty and thirty lectures, delivered by the author of the collection, Mr. Quekett, in a special theatre of the College.

"To bring the College and its unrivalled museum into its present state has required fifty-six years of exertion and care, together with a liberal and judicious expenditure of the funds accruing from the fees paid for the diploma. Such are the beneficial results to the public of the free and uncontrolled action of the College in the management of its own affairs, under the powers conferred by royal charters. The College, with its museum and library, cannot be kept up without a continuance of the same system under which it has justly gained the good opinion and confidence of the profession and the respect of the scientific world. The Medical Bill, as reported to the House of Commons by the select committee, would in effect destroy the College by transferring its powers to an untried, uncertain, and fluctuating body, of purely experimental character, called a Medical Council, and that without any allegation of misconduct or inefficiency on the part of the Institution. The name of the College might be left, but it would be despoiled and dishonoured, and a serious, if not fatal, blow would be inflicted on the respectability of the surgical profession.

"The president and vice-presidents of the College, having been refused a hearing before the select committee on matters involving not merely the interest but the very existence of the Institution, and not having succeeded in their attempts to gain an interview with the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for the purpose of objection and remonstrance, have been obliged to take this method of appealing to the members of the House of Commons individually against a measure which they do not hesitate to characterize as revolutionary and destructive. They take the liberty of suggesting that, as this amended Bill is in all its main points a new Bill, instead of being forced on at an interval of a week only from its first publication, ample time should be allowed for its examination and consideration by those institutions of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which it so deeply affects, and by the medical profession generally, whose interests and honour it assails. If not put aside altogether, it should at least, as in the case of Mr. Headlam's less objectionable Bill, stand over to another session.

"WILLIAM LAWRENCE, President.
BENJAMIN TRAVERS, { Vice-Presidents."
EDWARD STANLEY, }

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

PROFESSIONAL TERMS AND CUTANEOUS PATHOLOGY.

[NOTE FROM MR. DENDY.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A confusion of terms is one of the chief obstructions of professional knowledge. The last two numbers of your journal contain both illustrations of this truth and of the intricacies of cutaneous pathology. The cases of exanthem and of pock alluded to by Dr. Willshire and Mr. Ellis are very important, as they involve the questions of diagnosis between *specific* and *common* influences. The principle of concentration will often obviate diffuse discussions, and also simplify our practice; and I have had no reason to regret my decision on the specific and contagious nature of two prominent exanthemata, founded on degrees of the strawberry tongue and sore throat, or the injected conjunctivæ and nasal catarrh, so characteristic of *true* scarlatina and measles. I do not affirm this rule to be absolute, but I believe them to be at least as essential marks as the eruption itself, for severe and fatal scarlatina anginosa has often occurred without the development on the skin.

The epidemic popular exanthem, so prevalent even in the more aristocratic nurseries, assumes the merely *simple* form, and, though often severe, is shorn of the more especial symptoms alluded to, nor will it be prophylactic against subsequent invasion of the *specific* disorder. The circumstance of the body being studded with scarlet and papular rash in one part, and crescentic forms in another, is probably *indicative* of common or spurious nature.

In allusion to the case termed *vaccinella* by Mr. Ellis, I may

not question his right to adopt a name; but as I have presumed to apply the term to *spurious vaccine*, and also to deem his diagnosis incorrect, I am anxious to reconcile our opinions, and obviate a confusion of pathology.

I believe the form was that of *variocella*, (or varioloid, so misnamed,) the flat surface of the vesicles distinguishing it from varicella. The vaccination was probably a mere precedent of this modified variola, which may not only be consecutive to, but even synchronous with, vaccine. I believe the patient was saved by the vaccine insertion. In default of this there would have been an unmodified, very severe, and probably fatal variola. I have seen many cases of this clustered or semi-confluent variocella; but, as I have alluded to them in "The Varieties of Pock," I will not intrude further on your valuable columns. I am, Sir, yours obediently,

June, 1856.

WALTER C. DENDY.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF STRYCHNINE AS A MEDICINE.

[NOTE FROM DR. FLEETWOOD CHURCHILL.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me space in your journal to correct a mistake which some friends have pointed out in one of my works. At page 86 of my volume on "Diseases of Women," the dose of strychnine is stated to be "from one-tenth or one-fourth of a grain to a grain three times a day." I cannot explain how such a mistake occurred; but it is very clear, independent of late revelations as to the power of strychnine, that the latter dose would be a poisonous one. I have always commenced with one-sixteenth of a grain, and increased to one-twelfth or one-tenth of a grain, and I do not think it would be wise to give much more.

The error having been pointed out to me, I feel that it is my duty to point it out to the profession, and to express my regret.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

Stephen's-green, Dublin, June, 1856.

F. CHURCHILL.

DR. ASHLEY ON VESICULAR HYDATIDS OF THE UTERUS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As I have fallen under the "cold shade" of your Reviewer, will you permit me to trespass briefly on your valuable space in reply to his hypercritical remarks.

It is an error to suppose that I have been unmindful of the writings of modern pathologists, and I entertain the conviction that all the more salient points to be deduced from their researches have not been overlooked by me. In this view I am supported by the opinion of other reviewers.

Histologists of the present day have proved that the uterine hydatid is a cystic development of the chorion, conjoined with degeneration, and that this membrane is the common seat of hydatid formation. This was clearly indicated by Valisnieri nearly 150 years since.

I have seen attached cysts developed in a nulliparous uterus, and relying on the testimony of Dr. Ashwell, Dr. Hislop, and other accurate observers, I maintain that these growths not only arise on the villi of the chorion, but sometimes, though very rarely, are found in the unimpregnated uterus, probably taking their origin from protein or gelatinous exudations.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

Boyne-terrace, June, 1856.

W. H. ASHLEY.

THE PRIVATE COMMITTEE ON LUNACY LAW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Would you allow me to inquire through your pages who constituted "the Private Committee on Lunacy Law," and who elected them,—where they reside, and how I can reply to their anonymous circular which was posted yesterday to my country residence, without printer's or secretary's name, or any other means of tracing its author?—an act in itself illegal.

The apparent object of the circular is to agitate against a late order of the Commissioners in Lunacy, requiring lists of the payments made by patients to be kept at the private asylums for their inspection. Whether this order be just or legal I am not called upon to determine; a good deal might be said on both sides of the question. But I am called upon and do protest against the underhand way in which the authors of this circular would discuss the question. The authority of the

Commissioners in Lunacy must surely be wondrous great, when members of a liberal profession stoop thus to cope with it, under the shade of an anonymous address!

If you would do me the favour of publishing this letter, perhaps one of "the Private Committee on Lunacy" may muster courage to afford me the information I desire.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

C. LOCKHART ROBINSON, M.B. Cantab.,

Hon. Sec. to the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums and Hospitals for the Insane.

Charles-street, Berkeley-square, June 16th, 1856.

"EPILEPSY WITH TETANIC COMPLICATIONS."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Lord Campbell, in his summing-up, speaks thus of Dr. Macdonald's evidence: "Dr. Macdonald has gone the length of introducing a new term of disease, 'epilepsy with tetanic complications;' and a leader of *The Times* is very severe and sarcastic, and not very courteously applies the term "miserable jargon" to this designation of disease.

Now, the following case from Dr. Aldis' "Introduction to Hospital Practice" perfectly justifies Dr. Macdonald, and proves that "epilepsy with tetanic complications" is not mere hypothesis, but an actual disease. It shows, moreover, how extremely cautious non-professional persons should be before venturing to comment on medical opinions and evidence.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Chelsea, June, 1856.

EDWARD BULLOCK.

Case of Periodical Opisthotonos.

"A young man was admitted, on Wednesday, May 11th, for fits, accompanied by opisthotonos. On Thursday morning, I saw him labouring under one of his attacks. Mr. Hammerton and Mr. Malton, jun., also were present. The head and feet are drawn backwards, as far as possible, by tetanic spasm. The fit lasted about a quarter of an hour, during which time he was insensible. He gradually recovered, and complained of great pain in the occiput. On examining the head, there appeared to be an aperture between the occipital and parietal bones, for on pressing the integuments in that direction, the cerebral pulsation could be felt, as well as the edges of surrounding bone. The boy states that the opening in the skull has existed all his lifetime. The fits recurred frequently; and if he lay on his abdomen during the paroxysm, the head and feet were curved upwards and backwards."

How can the foregoing case be described more accurately than as one of "epilepsy with tetanic complications"?

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, JUNE 16TH.

MEDICAL RELIEF TO THE POOR.

Sir J. TROLLOPE wished to ask the President of the Poor-law Board whether he was prepared to adopt the recommendations of the Committee of 1854 upon medical relief to the poor, viz.:—1. That medical appointments should be permanent. 2. That the remuneration should be revised and increased. 3. That the districts should be examined.

Mr. BOUVIERIE said, that the recommendation of the select committee, that the area of the medical districts should be examined with a view to their limitation, was being done from time to time as occasion occurred. The recommendation that the medical appointments should be permanent had been complied with. The third point, that the Poor-law Board should increase the salaries of the medical officers where they were inadequate had been under the consideration of the board, with the view of obtaining a greater remuneration for medical men. That had been done to a certain extent, although not to the fullest extent desirable. An increase of £16,000 or £17,000 in the salaries within the last few years had been effected, but it was obvious that, unless a disposition existed on the part of the guardians to concur with the board, it was not possible to do all that was desirable herein.

UNION OF ABERDEEN UNIVERSITIES.

Mr. THOMPSON asked the Lord-Advocate whether he was prepared to bring in a Bill for the union of the Aberdeen Universities?