The job, I am sorry to say, did not here end; Dr. Canon was opposed by Dr. Andrew Buchanan, a man also of powerful political Whig influence (his brother Walter having seconded the nomination of James Oswald, at each election for M.P., at the hustings), and to be free of his influence, he contrived to get the lectureship of the theory of medicine made into a professorship—had Dr. Andrew Buchanan appointed Professor of the Theory of Medicine, and ejected Dr. Rainy, who had filled the situation for seven years with unusual *eclat*. Who ever heard of proceedings more discreditable to a national seat of learning? We have two men appointed to fill two most important chairs in our University, no one ever before having known that such appointments were to take place; and we have also a celebrated lecturer turned out of his class-room for not the slightest shadow of a reason, excepting that it should be filled by the *liberal* Dr. Andrew Buchanan. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ALPHA.

Glasgow, July 29, 1839.

* * We care not what are the politics of any of these parties; both the creation of such appointments, and the mode of electing to them, is altogether corrupt, and highly injurious to the character of our medical institutions, and to the best interests of medical students. The system will not last much longer.—ED. L.

THE NEW CHAIRS AT GLASGOW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—In your last number I observe a doleful ditty from a worthy "ALUMNUS" of Glasgow, in which he complains of "a measure of great injustice having just been accomplished in that University." Where lies the injustice we ask? Dr. Badham, when appointed to the chair of physic (in an unlucky hour for the interests of Glasgow College) by the Government, was led to understand that the Crown retained the privilege of instituting a professorship of the theory of medicine should the recommendation of the Commissioners appointed to examine the state of the University be carried into effect. Dr. Badham, however, considered that he was capable of delivering two courses of lectures on two distinct subjects, and actually humbugged the students and the professors by reading a few hasty disquisitions on what he called *theory*. But he soon found, as your correspondent observes, that "the duties of his chair were too many for him." Mark the sequel: "In consequence he invited Dr. Harry Rainey to become lecturer on the theory of medicine, reserving to himself the practice," and *one third of the fees* paid for the new course of

lectures; that is to say, he constituted himself patron of the chair of the theory of medicine, and sold it to Dr. Rainey for *one third* of the fees. Aye, truly, "a most nefarious plot!" What, now, is the complaint of Dr. R.'s friends? That, after having enjoyed his bargain for several years, Government have followed up the recommendation of the University Commissioners, by appointing a professor to the chair of the "theory of medicine;" and have chosen as the individual to fill that office not the man who expected to overturn the patronage by purchase—not one of the reputed priest-physicians of Glasgow—not one who, courting the patronage and applause of fanatics, would stifle to the uttermost the very name of reform, which is so much wanted in the College—but Dr. Andrew Buchanan, formerly one of the editors of that excellent periodical the *Glasgow Medical Journal*, whose writings and acute reasonings are, perhaps, better appreciated on the continent than in this country (I particularly allude to his papers in answer to the evidence of Dr. Thomson, of Edinburgh, in a case of gunshot wound, the serous membranes, and his experiments with iodide of starch, &c.), whose talents are not surpassed by any member of the faculty in the city, and whose liberal opinions cannot fail to assist in effecting an important reform in the infamous systems at present practised in the University. Government has acted admirably on the present occasion, and their decisive conduct will, I trust, upset the venal method of obtaining appointments which has been so much in fashion of late. Witness the chair of mathematics and the attempted plot in the moral philosophy. I may add that the appointment of Dr. Cowan does infinite honour to the patrons. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

D.

Aug. 5, 1839.

* * The writer has supplied his name and address.—ED. L.

OPERATIONS BY MR. T. LYON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—May I beg the favour of your inserting the present communication in your valuable Journal at your earliest convenience.

In some of the articles which have lately been published in your Journal respecting the unfortunate case of the late Joseph Hall, it has been assumed that the surgeon who injected the Eustachian tubes had not sufficient anatomical knowledge and skill to perform it, and thence a chain of reasoning has been attempted to account for the death. To show the fallacy of this mode of argument, I shall refer to two operations of

great magnitude performed by me, and recorded in the "Medical Gazette" of the 12th Oct., 1833, and 22nd Feb., 1834. These were cases of tumours situated directly upon, and in contact with, the common carotid arteries, both of which had a successful termination. One of these tumours was considered by the celebrated surgeon, Mr. Liston, of sufficient interest to be placed in his collection of morbid anatomy; the other is in my own collection. The operation of injecting the Eustachian tubes is considered by aurists of eminence as one of the minor operations of surgery. Mr. Pilcher, in his prize essay on Diseases of the Ears, states, at p. 308, that "a little experience renders the introduction of the catheter through the nose one of the *easiest* of the *minor* operations in surgery." I shall leave it to the profession to judge whether a surgeon capable of performing the operations above alluded to was not, also, capable of performing one of the *easiest* of the *minor* operations in surgery. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

T. LYON, M.R.C.S.L.

25, Montague-street, Russell-square,
Aug. 5, 1839.

JAUNDICE, FROM SPASMODIC ACTION OF THE DUODENUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—You will oblige me by giving the following case a place in your pages.—Your humble servant,

GEORGE LUCAS, Surgeon.

Ilkeaton, Derbyshire, Aug. 2, 1839.

Mr. —, æt. 64, of temperate habits, was seized in the night with violent abdominal pain, of a spasmodic nature, confined chiefly to the region of the umbilicus. Castor-oil was administered by his family with the view of unloading his bowels, which were constipated, but was not retained. I found him with a countenance expressive of much suffering, bending forwards, and exerting pressure upon the abdomen. Pulse natural; tongue white; conjunctiva tinged with bile; no vomiting since the rejection of the castor-oil, which was mixed with portions of undigested food.—Fomentations were ordered to the abdomen, and the following draught, to be taken immediately, which was to be encouraged to operate, by the use of an injection every hour:—

Powdered rhubarb, twenty-five grains;
Jalap, ten grains;
Aromatic powder, three grains;
Peppermint-water, six drachms;
Infusion of senna, six drachms.

Draught retained; second enema followed by three copious discharges from the bowels, with instant relief to the pain. On the day following he continued free from pain; urine scanty, and highly coloured, staining his linen; tongue white; conjunctiva and general appearance jaundiced; pulse not affected; slight pain on pressure over the duodenum.—Restrictions were now given as to diet, and the following medicine was ordered:—

Comp. rhubarb pill, half a drachm;

Blue pill, half a drachm; mix, and divide into twelve pills; two every night, and half an ounce of castor oil, in a little brandy, in the morning.

Under this treatment the stools, which, at first, were deficient in, soon became impregnated with, bile; the urine changed its colour, and increased in quantity; and all the symptoms of jaundice rapidly disappeared.—To have an ounce of infusion of columba containing carbonate of soda, thrice daily, and to attend strictly to diet. The next report says that the strength and appetite greatly improved; he considers himself well.

In a few days I was again summoned to attend him, and found him labouring under the same symptoms as at first. Similar means were adopted; but as the bowels were very obstinate, two aperient draughts, assisted by several enemata, were necessary in order to relax them. The relapse was, doubtless, owing to his partaking of peas at dinner, as the symptoms manifested themselves not many hours after, and gradually increased in severity, whilst the bowels remained unmoved; the pain continued, and I distinctly witnessed the conjunctival tinge become deeper every hour. By the use of the pills already mentioned, at night, and the infusion of senna, with tartarised soda, in the morning, the bile flowed into the proper channel, and, by a strict adherence to diet and regimen, his health is now re-established.

This case appears to me to afford an illustration of spasmodic action of the duodenum giving rise to jaundice, by obstructing the flow of bile through the ductus communis coledochus. That the pain resulted from spasmodic action is evident from its character, and the instantaneous relief which followed the use of aperient medicines. That the jaundice arose from the spasmodic action it is also fair to conclude, from the circumstance of the eyes becoming so deeply tinged with bile immediately after the commencement of the pain, and gradually losing that colour upon its cessation from free alvine evacuations.