have instances of white hairs occurring in the regrowth over a patch destroyed by parasitic disease, and the crop of hair which follows shaving of the whiskers and the beard in middle and advancing age is not uncommonly much lighter in hue than the original, and even occasionally merges on white. These point to individual vitality of each hair, and connect the change with the nutritive function. The non-implication of the integument in the examples of sudden whiteness from emotional causes also centres the action in the hair textures—the cell elements,—while the suddenness of the change and its universality connect it with a general agency. Can the process be similar to that gradually occurring in man and animals, but suddenly induced in the instances in question through the medium of the nervous system? Also in the illustrating examples, was the change originated by the intensity of the emotions, or, on the other hand, was it merely the hastening of a process naturally commencing? Careful inquiry into any future instance, and accurate examination of the details, would tend to throw light on this subject, obscure at least as far as the human species is concerned.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

FRANCIS H. WELCH, F.R.C.S.E.

Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley, May 13th, 1873.

INSURANCE OF MEDICAL MEN AGAINST SICKNESS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I observed a letter in THE LANCET of last week proposing the establishment of a sick benefit society for medical men, which, for a certain annual payment, would guarantee a weekly allowance when illness or accident should incapacitate from professional labour. On many occasions, both in medical and other papers, I have endeavoured to direct attention to the vast amount of good that would necessarily result from the formation of such a club for professional men and others of a similar class who are dependent for support on their own exertions, and who are compelled by circumstances to live just as much from hand to mouth as any mechanic, and to whom therefore sickness, if long continued, means absolute ruin; and their case is really much more pitiable than the so-called working man, for, with larger expenses and keener susceptibilities, they have to struggle not only against poverty, but against the appearance of it, as their position, and consequently their livelihood, depends to a great extent on externals. Your correspondent mentioned some sad cases of professional want which have been lately brought before us, and I think all your readers will agree that it is better with prudent foresight to ensure against a day of necessity than to be reduced to appeal to the charity of our brethren.

Most medical men are acquainted with benefit societies, like the Hearts of Oak, United Patriots, &c., with their tens of thousands of members, chiefly, of course, labourers and mechanics. The weekly grant during sickness is 18s., with other corresponding allowances; the annual payment to the club is about £2. If these are so successful, I can see no just reason why a club of a higher class should not flourish taking a nearly equal scale, which would be as follows for members under thirty-five years:—

Entrance Fees.	Yearly payments.	During sickness not exceeding 6 months per week.	Over that time superannuation allowance.
£0 10s. 0d. ...	£4 10s. 0d. ...	to receive £2 ...	£0 15s. 0d.
£1 0s. 0d. ...	£9 0s. 0d. ...	„ £4 ...	£1 10s. 0d.
£1 10s. 0d. ...	£13 10s. 0d. ...	„ £6 ...	£2 5s. 0d.
£2 0s. 0d. ...	£18 0s. 0d. ...	„ £8 ...	£3 0s. 0d.

with a corresponding scale of increase of payment according to age.

If the Hearts of Oak and other clubs are not only self-supporting, but also increasing their capital yearly, it is certain that a higher class society (whether medical only, or more extended in its operation) must succeed under proper management. All that is required is a commencement by some of the influential members of our profession, and I do trust that you, Sir, will give your powerful aid to such an undertaking.—I am, Sir, yours &c.,

May 20th, 1873.

WM. AKERMAN, L.K.Q.C.P., M.R.C.S.

“FEES FOR MEDICAL EVIDENCE.”

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I see in your impression of Saturday last a report of a case in which Dr. Clarke, of Blackhill, refused to give evidence unless he received a reasonable fee. Such cases are becoming too frequent, and I think something should be done to put an end to such loss of time and money unnecessarily incurred by medical men.

At the last Liverpool Assizes I was subpoenaed as a witness in the Court of Passage. I attended daily from 10 A.M. till 5 P.M., scarcely having time for necessary refreshment. To every inquiry I made I was told “The cases are short; yours is coming on next.” On the seventh day the case did come on. I informed Mr. Attorney-General Pickering on going into the witness-box that I had received no fee, and refused to give evidence until I was paid for attendance, when I was coolly told by the plaintiff’s counsel, “Doctor, we won’t require your evidence.” Such is the plain, unvarnished tale, and surely no comment is required to explain the intolerable nuisance such a course of procedure is to a medical man.

Inasmuch as a medical man is obliged to attend under a penalty of £100, surely in these days of “reform,” some arrangement could be made by which he would be guaranteed the moderate allowance of at least a guinea a day. I think medical men are altogether to blame in this matter. We have now-a-days so many medical charities, and so much indiscriminate gratuitous medical advice, that a great number of the public look upon it as part of a medical man’s duty to attend any case, whether he receives pay or not.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

J. WILSON STEELE, M.D.

Workhouse Hospital, Liverpool, May 19th, 1873.

DISABILITIES OF LICENTIATES OF COLLEGES OF PHYSICIANS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have been compelled, though most unwillingly, to sue in the County Court here in Sheffield for some fees due to me, the cost of medicines supplied to my own patients, and have been, much to my surprise, nonsuited by the judge, on the ground that I am not an apothecary, but L.R.C.P. Lond. The latter title the judge holds does not give the right to anyone to so recover, although at the time I pointed out to that magnate the decision of the late Lord Chancellor, related at length in the *Jurist* of June 1st, 1861, when the Apothecaries’ Hall brought their action against the College of Physicians, and which decision was entirely in favour of the College. And now, Sir, will you kindly let me know through the journal your opinion of the matter, as I feel the case to be serious to myself, and possibly so to all other licentiates who may be compelled to do as I have done.

I have written to the College of Physicians.

I remain, Sir, yours sincerely,

E. SKINNER, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond.

Sheffield, May 16th, 1873.

PHONOMETRY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of May 10th, under the head of “Foreign Gleanings,” you draw attention to Guttman’s criticisms on “a new method of investigation which Dr. Baas had described by the name of phonometry in the *Deutsches Archiv. für Klin. Med.*, 1872, Bd. xi.” In THE LANCET of Dec. 16th, 1871, a paper of mine is inserted entitled “The Application of the Diapason to Clinical Auscultation.” On comparing my paper with the abstract above alluded to, I find many of my own words repeated. These facts speak for themselves. In the face of my paper, does Dr. Baas claim to be the originator of this “new method of investigation”?

Your obedient servant,

W. HANDSEL GRIFFITHS.

Hume-street, Dublin, May 13th, 1873.