energies of the uterus, thereby enabling the practitioner to deliver when timely required, without, at the same time, making the least demand upon her already exhausted powers, which is the case when we have recourse to the manual operation of version and extraction of the child; but it is also a powerful general stimulant, and raises the power and action of the heart. This happy result I have observed in several cases, and the power in question gives to this agent a great superiority over the secale cornutum in such cases.

Since my former communication on the use of galvanism, I have used it in several cases of flooding and also of tedious labour, and I am only further convinced of its great value as a remedial means. These cases shall in due time be laid before the profession.—I have the honour to be, Sir, most respectfully yours,

THOMAS RADFORD.

Manchester, Nov. 1846.

PLACENTA PRÆVIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The case related by Mr. B. Tallan, in THE LANCET of Nov. 14th, certainly demanded the most prompt and energetic treatment. As to the conduct of the patient's usual medical adviser, I shall only remark, that it admits of no defence. In answer to the following question of Mr. Tallan—"Should I have contented myself with plugging the vagina, and not have delivered? or should I have contented myself with merely separating the placenta?" permit me to say, that in such a case I should not have plugged the vagina, and for this reason—namely, that the plug might, and probably would, have prevented the flow of blood externally, but would not have prevented its flowing internally, and distending the uterus, which would be equally dangerous. As there could be no doubt about the death of the child, I should have instantly extracted the placenta, and delivered, by turning, as speedily as possible, pressure being kept on the uterus by the hands of an assistant. This pressure might have been continued afterwards by the use of the basin, as I have described in the *Medical Gazette*, Jan. 30, 1846, and in THE LANCET of about the same date. The recumbent position, open windows, and the administration of ergot and brandy, I regard as very judicious; but in a case of such extreme exhaustion, all our efforts are, unfortunately, likely to prove unavailing.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Castle Hedingham, Nov. 1846.

GEORGE HARVEY.

PARACENTESIS THORACIS.

THE CASES OF DR. DAVIES, PUBLISHED IN 1835.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a gross and illiberal attack made upon my late father, Dr. Thomas Davies, in the notes to a recent translation of Laennec, purporting to be published by a Dr. Theophilus Herbert. In these notes I find a statement directly charging my late father with having wilfully misrepresented the results of his practice, in regard to empyema, and with having inserted in the table, published in his "Lectures on the Diseases of the Chest," a number of cases of that malady, stated to have been cured by paracentesis thoracis, but in which the operation had never been performed. Having no intention of entering into a controversy with the translator, nor with the individual by whom he has been assisted in the work, I shall strictly confine myself to the following brief statement, believing that I shall thereby best vindicate my father's memory from an imputation which, coming from whatever source it may, ought not, I conceive, to be passed over in total silence.

The table detailing the results of the sixteen cases of empyema, uncombined with phthisis, referred to by the writer of the notes to the new translation of Laennec, was first published by my late father in the *Medical Gazette** of Feb. 1835, and in it were also given the names of the gentlemen who performed the operations. The truth of these statements was questioned by no one during my father's lifetime, and it is now, for the first time, at a period of eleven years from the publication of these cases, and more than seven years from my father's death, that the individuals who have combined in the compilation of these notes have thought proper to advance a charge, involving not only my late father, but also the gentlemen who conducted the operations, and allowed their names to be inserted in the published table. With the exception of Mr. Headington and Mr. John Scott, these gen-

* They were also published in THE LANCET at about the same date.

tlemen are still living, and capable of proving the absolute falsehood of the statement.

A brief consideration of these facts will be sufficient, I conceive, to enable the medical profession generally to estimate the degree of credibility to be attached to these notes to Laennec, and will be sufficient also to enable those who are in any way acquainted with the parties connected with the work, to infer the motives which have led to the publication of so gross and false an accusation.

Hoping you will allow the insertion of these remarks in your valuable journal, I beg to remain, yours, obediently,

Finsbury-square, Dec. 1846.

HERBERT DAVIES.

LICENCE OF THE APOTHECARIES' SOCIETY OF LONDON NOT A QUALIFICATION IN CANADA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It may be of importance to many students of medicine to be made aware that a licence of the Apothecaries' Company in Blackfriars will not entitle the possessor to admission as a general practitioner in the British territory of the Canadas.

In the *Medical Gazette* of August 20, 1845, in the editorial article of that week, it is stated that "the licence of the Apothecaries' Company is no criterion of competency to practise midwifery." The licence of Blackfriars is also confessedly no criterion of competency to practise surgery. But the general practitioner of England is expected to practise both midwifery and surgery. Yet the general practitioner derives his sole legal licence from the Apothecaries' Company, and requires no other.

An individual to whom the Apothecary authorities have granted a licence, being called to attend the delivery of a female, not only tears out her womb, but rips forth her bowels, pulls out and cuts away her very entrails, disembowels her alive. So far as the Apothecary authorities are concerned, there is no guarantee that the persons to whom they give their licences do not perform surgical operations with a skill equal to that of the obstetric operation by one of their licentiates now cited.

At first sight it would seem an injustice, that in the Canadas a licentiate of the Apothecaries' Company is not permitted to practise without examination by the Board of Medicine of the country; but upon considering the above particulars, the justice as well as the absolute necessity of the local regulation is more than apparent.

How long are the highly intelligent class of gentlemen who constitute the general practitioners of all England to continue to have no better legal authority than an apothecary's* licence, and to enjoy no other position in the community than the dignity derived from a retail druggist's shop in Blackfriars?—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Hamilton, South Canada, Nov. 1846.

B. HAYGARTH, M.D.

NOTE FROM MR. BURSEY, SURGEON, WALTHAM ABBEY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Being busily engaged in practice, the number of THE LANCET for November 14th did not come under my notice until yesterday, when I was most astonished to find my name figuring in no very reputable manner in the communication of one who signs himself "Rhadamanthus."

With respect to the handbills so properly held up to public condemnation, I have merely to say, that although the author of those handbills is certainly a relative of mine, I never in any way gave him authority to make use of my name for that or any other purpose, and, indeed, never had any conversation or communication with him upon any such subjects. As for "my practice of dry cupping," stated to be "so eminently successful" in such a strange variety of disorders, I do not recollect ever having had recourse to such a remedial agent.

I appeal to your sense of fairness for the insertion of this letter in THE LANCET as early as possible, lest others, as well as "Rhadamanthus," should conclude me capable of thus "degrading the profession," or lest, perchance, the "Council of the College should warn me to desist, on pain of expulsion," &c.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Waltham Abbey, Essex, Dec. 1846.

late of Chandos-street, Strand.

* "Apothecary" is polite classic for "drugster" in plain English. If "drugster" is not a proper appellation for medical practitioners, why call them "apothecaries"?