Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

PSYCHOLOGICAL JOURNALISM AND DR. BUCKNILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The review of the *Psychological Journal* in THE LANCET of February 22nd, contains various censures, as grave as they are groundless, of the *Asylum Journal of Mental Science*, and of the Association by which that journal is published. They are stated in the announcement of a *fact* and in the enunciation of a *principle*. The fact is, that the *Asylum Journal* is a servile imitation of the *Psychological Journal*. The principle is, that the publication of a journal in a department of science already represented in literature, is wrong. I deny the truth of the *fact*, and the justice of the *principle*.

The journals are as unlike as it is possible that two journals in the same department of science can be. The writers in the *Asylum Journal* are, for the most part, the medical officers of public asylums; they never contributed to Dr. Winslow's periodical; their articles are attested by their signatures; and the subject matter of them is more directed to the treatment of insanity and to the management of asylums than to pure psychology. The outward form, also, which the critic says *might* be imitated, has not been imitated. Your readers may verify the truth of these assertions at any of the medical libraries, or by purchasing the two journals and perusing them at their leisure. The latter mode of comparison I cannot too strongly recommend. The objection to a second journal in a field already occupied by Dr. Winslow, is a principle I little expected to see in the liberal pages of THE LANCET. It is a principle which would convert the republic of letters into a series of petty despotisms; which would restrict the navigation of the free waters of science, and convert them into the *mare clausum* of diplomatists; and it is a principle at variance with all the opinions of the editor of THE LANCET, who, during a long and active life, has moved in the van of political and social progress. Are small and often-mistaken personal interests to obstruct the paths of knowledge. If so, let it be done by authority, and let the Royal Inprimatur be given, not by censorship, but by seniority, as generals are chosen—and wine. Let no journal be read which hath not a fine smack of age in it.

But were there no medical journals in existence when THE LANCET commenced its career? It is said that the cushions of the episcopal bench are as the waters of Lethe to reforming churchmen, and it is certain that the sweets of possession often narcotise the mind to the invigorating struggles of progress. In no other way is it intelligible that THE LANCET should seek to impose shackles on the periodical literature of medicine.

"Quam sibi quisque timet, quanquam est intactus et odit."

One other point I have to notice, namely, the objection to the *Asylum Journal* being published by the Association of Medical Officers of Asylums, and the inference that because another journal published by an association, is a "rickety starveling," &c., that this also is destined to premature decay and an early grave. The critic's wishes, however, are much more obvious than his reasons. The latter are founded upon the statistics of *one* case. Permit me to supply him with a few others, and to remind him that periodicals, "the offspring of private speculation," are not exempt from the liabilities which he attempts to fix on the "nurselings of many fathers." The other instances which we would beg to add to his computation of probabilities, comprise all the insanity journals of other countries. They are the French *Annales Médico-Psychologiques*, commenced in 1843. The American *Journal of Insanity*, commenced in the same year. The German *Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie*, commenced a year later. All of these are quarterly journals, and all of them are in the full vigour of existence and prosperity, although, like the *Asylum Journal* and the more recent *Correspondenz Blatt für Psychiatrie*, they are the nurselings of associations. In all countries, therefore, association journals appear to be particularly in favour with medical men devoted to the specialty of insanity. Between such men, having common interests, common difficulties and anxieties, and with few sources of rivalry, they form a bond of union and a means of inter-communication and information; a bond the more necessary because the duties of such men compel them to live far apart and in great isolation. The new journal, as the critic calls the *Asylum Journal*,

was first published in 1853. It has, however, only recently been honoured by his polite attention, and I shall feel particularly obliged if he will point out any symptoms of its decay.

The above remarks I have written solely in defence of the honour of the association and the interests of the journal with which I am connected, and in no spirit of opposition to Dr. Forbes Winslow, towards whom I entertain the highest respect and esteem.

I have the honour Sir, to remain,

Your very obedient servant,

JOHN CHARLES BUCKNILL,
Editor of the *Asylum Journal*
of Mental Science.

Exeter, Feb. 1856.

THE APOTHECARIES' COMPANY AND ILLEGAL PRACTICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In no part of England that I have ever visited, and my wanderings have not been limited, is the Apothecaries' Act so grossly infringed as in the good old city of Coventry; no town that I know would derive more benefit from the introduction of medical reform. The medical men of this city rank high in the profession, but individually do but little practice, owing to the great number of druggists who practise in *every way* as general practitioners—visit, prescribe, and dispense, and, without a shadow of a qualification. Surely the Apothecaries' Company might here find legitimate game, without harassing unfortunate members of the College, as in the case reported in THE LANCET of the 23rd ultimo.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Coventry, March, 1856.

J. SMITH, M.R.C.S., L.A.C.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The perusal of your article on the case of Mr. Cockcroft reminds me of the following circumstance, showing, at least, one method of defeating at once both the malice of antagonist practitioners, and the undignified persecuting spirit of the Apothecaries' Company.

Between twenty and thirty years ago, an acquaintance of mine, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, a licentiate of the College of Surgeons, Edinburgh, and a member of the College of Surgeons, London, became the assistant of a general practitioner in a town in Kent. This young man soon became a great favourite amongst the patients, jealousy seized his employer's mind, and he discharged him. He then commenced business on his own account, and met with great success. His former employer now discovered that his young rival was disqualified for general practice, and brought the case before the Apothecaries' Company. Two prosecutions, and two fines of £20 each, ensued. As necessity is the mother of invention, my friend, on whose exertions a father's and a sister's livelihood depended, pursued this plan. His hitherto private surgery was converted into an open shop, his sister's name appeared over it, as a chemist; he wrote prescriptions as a physician, which were sent to the shop, and the bills were made out in his sister's name. His former master lost ground daily, and at last was obliged to retire, and the Worshipful Company paid no more devotion in that quarter.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Bath, March, 1856.

P. BALLANTYNE FERGUSON, M.D.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I think an advertisement from the Society of Apothecaries, in THE LANCET last week, deserves especial attention, as it clearly points out how the interests of general practitioners would be affected should Mr. Headlam's Bill be carried into operation, without some additional protection to the licensed physician or surgeon. From the difficulty we now experience in restraining illegal practice, with the protection of the Apothecaries' Act, in how much worse a position shall we be placed when, that Act being repealed, the only illegality will be "the falsely pretending to be a registered person?" and providing anyone does not assume to be a physician, surgeon, or apothecary, he may practise quite unrestrainedly, and furnish medicine, &c., the only drawback being that he cannot hold any appointment, or recover for his charges in the county courts. Many are now practising under the title of accoucheurs only, but legally they cannot now furnish medicine without incurring a

penalty. The Bill will give them that privilege; and also, in the words of Mr. Upton, Clerk to the Society of "Chemists and Druggists, should the Bill become law, will be legally entitled to practice any and every branch of the profession." I do not object to any of the provisions of the Act as far as they extend, but surely another clause might be added to prevent our losing the only safeguard we at present possess against illegal practice, or the 39th clause might be amended to include all unqualified persons practising in any way, or under any denomination, as well as "falsely pretending to be a registered person."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

G. M. PRITCHETT, M.R.C.S. and L.A.C.

Keppel-street, March, 1856.

* * We are authorised to state that when the Medical Bill goes into committee, a clause will be proposed which will remove all questions as to the penalties to be imposed on persons practising illegally.

WHAT HAVE THE MEDICAL MEN OF NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE DONE FOR MEDICAL REFORM?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—By this time Mr. Headlam's Medical Bill must be in the hands of every medical practitioner in England, and I feel certain the majority in its favour is very large. Yet, is it not very surprising that the medical men of Newcastle-on-Tyne, the very town Mr. Headlam is member for, have not made a stir in favour of the new Bill. I will again repeat my question, What have the medical men of Newcastle-on-Tyne, and of Gateshead, done towards medical reform?

I observe, by our local papers, that the tried friend of medical reform, Dr. Lankaster, is to lecture in Newcastle this week, and next week also. It is to be hoped he will create a spirit of independence amongst the medicals of the town, and hasten them to duty. Would we have our profession protected, the present is the opportunity. We must to the work ourselves, and forget all petty squabbles for the general good.

Much rests with the medical practitioners of Newcastle; they should now support their representative in his endeavours for medical reform; no county in England needs it so much as Northumberland, and especially Newcastle-on-Tyne, with Gateshead in Durham. A committee formed under the veterans Fife and Headlam, must do good by calling a meeting of the profession, to take place in Newcastle, and I feel assured the call would be well met. How can we, as a body, expect help from abroad, if we do not help ourselves; and now that an opportunity is afforded, we ought to take advantage of it.

As a Northumbrian practitioner, I sincerely trust the medical gentlemen of Newcastle and Gateshead will do their duty, and show that they are worthy members of the profession of medicine.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Northumberland, March 4th, 1856.

MEDICUS.

MILITIA SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I make no apology for claiming a limited space in THE LANCET, to draw the attention of militia surgeons to their present unsatisfactory position. I am not aware that the subject has been mentioned by any of the body, but I well know that to state a fair case, and one that bears hard upon a class of the profession, is to enlist your pen and any space in your journal which can be spared. Militia Surgeons are unlike all other officers in her Majesty's service at present. We have left our professional connexions, to make which we toiled for the best years of our lives. We can never hope to return to our old positions; they have long since been filled. If thrown again upon the world, I fear the majority of us will, with our families, undergo severe pecuniary privations. A year's pay has barely sufficed to procure instruments, uniform, and the first year's heavy regimental subscriptions. Perhaps, Sir, you can give us some comforting advice, and, at any rate, an opportunity for making some arrangements to seek redress.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

March 2nd, 1856.

A MILITIA SURGEON.

MR. GRIFFIN'S MOVEMENT.—Upwards of sixty Unions have joined this movement.

SCOTLAND.

[FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.]

EDINBURGH ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY.

On Friday evening, Feb. 22nd, Dr. J. H. Bennett, Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the Edinburgh University, read before this Society a communication on the "Pathology and Treatment of Inflammation." The name of Dr. Bennett and the subject of his communication were sufficient to attract a numerous and crowded auditory, and amongst them were several professors and practitioners of high standing in Edinburgh. Dr. Bennett, after some preliminary remarks, in which he alluded to the importance of the subject as a foundation for true pathology, defined inflammation as an exudation of the normal liquor sanguinis. Referring to other definitions, he called their correctness in question. Mr. Paget had been unable to define inflammation. The view that inflammation might exist in non-vascular tissue he opposed by an examination of what occurs in so-called ulceration of cartilage, cornea, and epithelium; the distinction being, that in inflamed parts there would be exudation of liquor sanguinis, in which new cells would form, but in non-vascular tissues there would be simply increased growth, induced by endogenous multiplication of pre-existing cells. Then, describing the various phenomena of inflammation, he divided them into preliminary, essential, and resulting phenomena. The preliminary phenomena were contraction and enlargement of the smaller vessels, increase and diminution in the flow of blood, and congestion. The essential phenomenon was exudation of the liquor sanguinis, without which no inflammation could exist. The distinction between it and effusion of serum and extravasation he pointed out. The resulting phenomena were two: an increase of growth by new cell formation, and absence or diminution of cell growth. The theory of the preliminary phenomena consisted in spasm and paralysis of the extreme vessels, operating sometimes through the nervous system, directly or by reflex action; at other times the result of an injury, chemical or mechanical, applied to the part; in that of increased quantitative and diminished qualitative attraction exerted by the tissues on the blood; the increased spissitude of that fluid. The theory of the essential phenomenon consisted in the attraction of the liquor sanguinis through the vascular walls into the surrounding parenchyma or neighbouring cavities, where it coagulated to form a foreign body. The theory of the resulting phenomena was, attributing to the exuded matter, in one case, the properties of a living blastema, when it followed the vital laws of cell growth; in the other case, the properties of dead or dying matter, when rendered obedient to chemico-physical laws. Dr. Bennett then described the various ways in which the exuded matter, if it lived, was transformed; after which, he said, the disappearance of the exudation is brought about by the breaking down and disintegration of the exudation, which is rapid according to the amount of cell formation in it, by the passage of the disintegrated exudation in a fluid state into the blood, and its elimination from the economy by the excretory, integumentary, intestinal, and renal glands. The exuded matter might die suddenly or slowly; if suddenly, its elements combined with those of the atmosphere chemically, and caused inflammatory gangrene; if slowly, it gradually disintegrated, involved the surrounding tissue, and produced ulceration. Then, remarking upon the symptoms of inflammation, Dr. Bennett noticed their fallacious character. Heat, pain, redness, and swelling might all be absent in positive cases of inflammation; hence the error in studying mere symptoms, and how necessary to blend with it a knowledge of physical signs. These facts led to the conclusion that all the healing phenomena of inflammation were reparative, and depended on cell growth. From them was formed the induction "that the treatment of inflammation, to be successful, must be in harmony with those laws which govern the formation, development, and disintegration of cells." The treatment of inflammation bore reference to three orders of phenomena. The symptoms of the preliminary phenomena when seen in medical practice could not be separated from those of fever. In surgical practice they might be predicted to follow injuries and operations, but there were no means of arresting them, and the treatment was expectant. The essential phenomenon was frequently observed taking place in surgical practice, but seldom recognised at the moment of its occurrence in medical. In the latter case it is often most important to arrest exudation, but no remedies could ever be proved to have done so; this was illustrated by the effects of general and local bleeding. In surgical practice,