

dropping a little dilute acid in a saucerful of chloride of lime. To this I owe my own preservation when lodging in a house with three of the worst cases of fever I ever saw, although I was in almost constant attendance on them. There are many other points I should wish to have noticed, but a fear of intruding too far on your valuable space prevents me.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Kennington-road, Feb. 1858. R. HALL BAKEWELL, M.D.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND THE SCOTCH REGISTRATION ACT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you be so obliging as to give insertion in the next number of your valuable journal to the subjoined petition to the House of Commons from the members of the medical profession in this town, and to the accompanying correspondence with Mr. Baxter, M.P., to whose care it has been entrusted.

So far as I and my brethren here can learn, there exists a widespread if not universal feeling of discontent, amounting almost to rebellion, throughout the profession in Scotland at the operation of the Registration Act; and after the recent *exposé*, by Sheriff Strathern, of the true character of the Act, we think the time has come for a general movement to throw off the yoke which it has so unceremoniously imposed upon us.

May I express a hope that you will aid in developing such a movement, and lend your powerful advocacy to conduct it to a successful issue?

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
Montrose, March 13th, 1858. S. LAWRENCE, M.D.

[COPY.]

Montrose, March 9th, 1858.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit to you, for presentation to the House of Commons, a petition, signed by *all* the members of the medical profession in Montrose, praying for a repeal of Section 41st of the Scotch Registration Act; or, alternatively, for a just and adequate remuneration for the professional service which that clause of the said Act imposes upon them. In the terms of our petition, we feel it to be both "unjust and oppressive" that valuable information should be mulcted from us as to the cause of death, not only without any compensation, but under the pains and penalties of law. It is frequently impossible to give the required information without subjecting ourselves to an amount of trouble which encroaches very seriously upon our time, and thus interferes with other duties. In every other case where medical testimony is deemed requisite for the interests whether of individuals or of society, it is an acknowledged principle that it must be paid for; and we are unable to perceive any reason why this principle should be departed from in the case of the Registration Act.

As an instance of the oppressive nature of this Act towards the medical profession, I would take the liberty respectfully to call your attention to THE LANCET of the 20th February last, pages 195-6; and I feel persuaded that after the perusal of the case of Dr. McDonald there detailed, with the accompanying editorial commentary, you will admit that the grievance of which we complain is a very glaring one, and demands immediate redress.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,
W. E. Baxter, Esq., M.P. (Signed) S. LAWRENCE, M.D.

[MR. BAXTER'S REPLY.]

Dundee, March 12th, 1858.

DEAR SIR,—Your favour of the 9th has been forwarded to me. I expect to be in London early next week, when I shall have great pleasure in presenting your petition. My attention has been before called to the serious grievance of which the medical men complain, and I will consult with friends as to the best steps which ought to be taken to remedy it.

Believe me, dear Sir, sincerely yours,
S. Lawrence, M.D. (Signed) W. E. BAXTER.

Unto the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The petition of the undersigned Medical Practitioners in Montrose, humbly sheweth,—

That whereas by an Act passed in the 17th and 18th years of the reign of her present Majesty, intituled "An Act to provide for the better Registration of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Scotland," medical practitioners "who shall have

been in attendance during the last illness and until the death of any person, shall, within fourteen days after the death of such person, and under a penalty not exceeding 40s. in case of failure, transmit to the registrar a certificate of such death;" and no compensation is provided by the Act for such professional service; and whereas such unremunerated service under such penalty is felt by your petitioners to be both unjust and oppressive,—

May it therefore please your honourable House to repeal so much of the said Act as compulsorily exacts such service from medical practitioners, or to enact that they shall henceforth be entitled to receive a just and adequate remuneration for the same. And your petitioners will ever pray.

HENRY HOILE, M.R.C.S.
DAVID JOHNSTON, M.D., L.R.C.S. Ed.
S. LAWRENCE, M.D., L.R.C.S. Ed.
JOHN BURNES, M.D.
A. M. OFFICER, M.D.
JAMES C. HOWDEN, M.D.
JOHN A. ROSS, L.R.C.S. Ed.
GEORGE STEELE, M.D.

CASE OF TRANSFUSION FOLLOWED BY DROPSY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Many of your readers will probably recollect an interesting case of transfusion, which appeared in your journal on the 3rd Oct., 1857, and which ultimately came under the care of Dr. Mackinder, with whom I am assistant. The patient, Mrs. W—, not recovering her usual state of health so quickly as desired, was anxious to place herself under the medical attendant of her family, and consequently came to visit her mother at Gainsborough for that purpose. On the 4th of February, 1858, Dr. Mackinder, in conjunction with myself, first visited her, and found her in a state of great anæmia, with ascites and anasarca of the whole body. We prescribed the most nourishing and stimulating diet, under which she at first slightly rallied; but on the 17th, being threatened with suffocation from a greater distension of the abdomen, we were compelled to perform paracentesis abdominis, drawing off thirty-four pints of limpid fluid. From this operation she never recovered, but sank two days after, in spite of all our endeavours to save her. The above case is interesting in a physiological point of view. It becomes questionable whether the dropsy was dependant upon the transfusion or was an idiopathic affection. Perhaps some of your readers will have the kindness to enlighten me upon this subject.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Gainsborough, March, 1858. H. B. SMALLMAN, M.R.C.S.E.

PERTUSSAL GLUCOSURIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your valuable number for Saturday, January 30th, under the head of "Clinical Records," a short article occurs, which speaks of the discovery by Dr. Gibb in 1855 of sugar in the urine of pertussis, and also draws attention to the wonderful rapidity and efficacy with which nitric acid removes that morbid product from the urine. Previously to reading that article, I was not aware that any writer had taken notice of this pathological state of the urine. Dr. Gibb, in his work on Hooping-Cough, published in 1854, gives not the slightest hint of sugar in his analysis of the urine, although he strongly recommends in that work the nitric acid as a certain cure for the complaint, and explains its *modus operandi*—"by its supplying nitrogen to the blood, to remove or neutralize the excess of fibrine existing in that fluid, one of the dangerous elements of the disease, and so destroy the poisonous principle combined with it, which is the primary cause of this affection." At the same time he mentions that Dr. Arnoldi used nitric acid as a remedy in pertussis, in order that it might introduce the elements of the atmosphere into the blood by the process of gastric digestion, and so enable the lungs to outstand the stage of temporary asphyxia, which is induced by a severe paroxysm.

Previously to reading your short notice, I had flattered myself that I was the first to notice this pathological state; but as Dr. Gibb made it known in 1855, I can now only bear my corroborative testimony to it, which I do with great pleasure. At the same time, however, I must make a few remarks to show that it is not peculiar to hooping-cough, and cannot be considered as the cause of it, but only an effect. During the summer of 1856, I read with great pleasure the results of the