THE LONDON MEDICAL REGISTRATION ASSOCIATION.

BYE-LAWS.

1. THAT the affairs of the Association shall be conducted by a President, Vice-Presidents, a Committee, Treasurer, Honorary Secretaries, and an Assistant-Secretary, who shall be a paid officer.
2. That there shall be a Vigilance Committee, which shall consist of not more than seven members, to be named by the Committee, with the President, Vice-Presidents, and honorary officers as *ex-officio* members. And that, for the greater despatch of business, they shall meet as often as they deem necessary.
3. That the Committee shall meet on the first Wednesday in every month, to receive the reports of the sub-committees, and to determine what further steps shall be taken to extend the usefulness of the Association.
4. That an annual general meeting of the members of the Association shall be held on the first Thursday in November of each year, to elect the honorary and other officers and the Committee, and to receive the report of the proceedings of the Association for the past year.
5. That the Committee shall have the power of calling a special meeting of the members for any purpose which they may deem necessary for the benefit of the Association.
6. That at all meetings, in the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, a Chairman shall be elected; and that the minutes of the previous meeting be read and confirmed, before proceeding to the other business of the day.
7. That the name and qualification of every gentleman desirous of becoming a member of the Association shall be submitted to the Vigilance Committee, and, if eligible, he shall be elected at their discretion. And that no privilege of membership shall be exercised by any member while his subscription is in arrear.
8. That in the event of any member being accused of practising other than what is understood to be orthodox medicine, the Vigilance Committee shall communicate with the said member, informing him of the accusation brought against him, and requesting his attendance before the Vigilance Committee. And the Vigilance Committee shall report the same to the Committee at their next meeting, with the result of their investigations.
9. That the business of the Assistant-Secretary shall be to have the custody of the books belonging to the Association; to issue notices convening meetings, which he shall attend, and enter the proceedings in the minute-book; to prepare the reports, and otherwise to act under the direction of the Committees.
10. That a copy of the laws shall be inserted in the book kept for the registration of members of the Association, and that the signatures of members in that book shall be deemed to imply their consent to those laws; and that no laws shall be altered except by vote taken at a general or special meeting of the Association.

The Vigilance Committee met on Wednesday evening last, January 19th, when communications were read from several Registration Associations, highly approving of the "protest" forwarded by that Committee to Sir Benjamin Brodie, and concurring in the views of the London Medical Registration Association as to the importance of an attested declaration of identity and the possession of qualifications in every instance of registration.

The Honorary Secretary, Dr. Ladd, reported to the Committee that he had already placed upon the Register a large number of practitioners who had become members of the Association; and that he had laid before Dr. Hawkins particulars relative to fifty persons who are practising medicine without diplomas or other qualifications.

Many new members were elected at this meeting.

THE OPENING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

THE Senate of the University of London has settled the Regulations for conducting the examinations for the degree of B.A. There is to be a matriculation examination; and, in addition, a first and second examination for the B.A. The

character of these three examinations is progressive in range and severity. The College candidates will soon have an opportunity of learning by experience that honest work, and not cramming, whether *intra* or *extra muros*, will be the only passport to the degree. In order to meet the objections that repeated examinations would entail upon provincial candidates great expense and inconvenience in travelling to London, it has been determined to admit of provincial examinations. In cases where application shall be made, a sub-examiner will be sent down to the country with the question-papers; the examination will be conducted on the same plan and at the same time as in London; the sub-examiner will collect and send up the answers, and place them in the hands of the examiners in London, who will report upon them simultaneously with the London candidates.

It will be remembered, that a last frantic effort was made by the College monopolists in Convocation to defeat this most just and liberal extension of the advantages of the University. Convocation has "expressed its opinion"—a bigoted and foolish one. The Senate has carried out its policy—a wise and progressive one. The public at least will be very well contented.

Correspondence.

"Audialteram partem."

POSSIBILITY OF REPAIR AND OF RETURN OF FUNCTION AFTER A PARTIAL OR A COMPLETE DIVISION OF THE SPINAL CORD IN MAN AND ANIMALS.

[LETTER FROM DR. BROWN-SÉQUARD.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of the 25th of December last there is a letter by Mr. G. H. Lewes, in which he relates the interesting observation he has made of return of connexion between the brain and the abdominal limbs of a frog some time after a complete division of the spinal cord. Although he has not ascertained the real state of this organ, he concludes—rightly, I think—that reunion has taken place between the surfaces of the section. I have seen similar facts in more than twenty warm-blooded animals, and an account of the results of my observations was published in 1852 (see the *Medical Examiner*, Philadelphia, June, 1852, p. 379).^{*} Not only have I seen the return of function, but I have ascertained, with the assistance of Dr. Charles Robin in one case, of Professor Lebert in another, of Dr. Follin in a third, and of Dr. Laboulbène in a fourth, that a real cicatrization with reunion of divided nerve-fibres had taken place in the spinal cord. The details of one of my experiments will show how complete the reunion may be. In a pigeon the entire spinal cord was divided transversely, at the level of the fifth or sixth dorsal vertebra. Complete paralysis, both of motion and sensibility, was at once produced in the whole posterior or lower half of the body, in which there were no other movements than those due to the very powerful reflex power that I have found to exist in birds to a greater degree even than in Batrachia. Three months after the operation there was a slight appearance of sensibility and voluntary movements in the abdominal limbs. These powers gradually augmented, and after three months more the bird could stand for some minutes, but fell as soon as it attempted to walk. In the course of the seventh month it began to walk, but with a very unsteady gait, and had constantly to help itself with its wings. By the end of the eighth month it could walk, with this help, when going forward slowly; but it fell at once, unless supported by its wings, when it tried to walk fast. When it was walking a little faster than usual, it unfolded its wings a little, so as to be ready to make use of them. In the beginning of the thirteenth month it was able to run, and two months afterwards its progression in all respects seemed to be

^{*} My researches on this subject were first published ten years ago in the "Comptes Rendus de la Société de Biologie" for 1849 and 1850, and afterwards in the above-named journal. A summary of the results of my experiments was also published in my work, "Experimental Researches applied to Physiology and Pathology," New York, 1853, and in the two last editions of the learned work of Professor Carpenter, "Human Physiology."

normal, except that there was a slight degree of stiffness in its gait. Sensibility had returned, and seemed to be normal, in the sixth or seventh month. Not only had sensibility and voluntary movements completely returned fifteen months after the operation, but also the functions of the generative (male) organs had been completely restored, and females were fecundated by it. I made the examination of the spinal marrow with the assistance of that most able micrographer, Dr. Charles Robin. At the place of the section we found an opaque, whitish circular line, round the cord, and a bundle of fibres of areolar tissue uniting this organ with the dura mater. The transverse diameters of the cord were diminished at the level of this opaque line, or rather furrow. This was a real cicatrix, in which we found, besides normal longitudinal nerve-fibres, transversal and oblique fibres of conjunctive tissue. As to the nervous tissues, the nerve-fibres presented varicosities like those of the brain and of the cerebral nerves, and there were cells of grey matter, not only in the central parts of the cicatrix, but also near the circumference, in the continuation of the white columns.

In guinea-pigs also I have seen reunion and repair after a complete division of the spinal cord, but this is much less frequent than in birds. In cases of a partial division of the spinal cord, reunion often takes place in dogs and cats, as well as in guinea-pigs, especially in young animals. Many facts seem to show that the same thing can take place in man. There are several cases on record, observed by Dr. Eli Hurd, Ollivier (d'Angers), Lallemand, and M. Viguès, in which a deep wound of the spinal cord was, at first, the cause of a paralysis, that had gradually ceased after a time, most probably on account of the repair of the injured parts.

I remain, Sir, yours very sincerely,

E. BROWN-SÉQUARD, M.D.

Paris, 16, Rue du Dragon, Jan. 10th, 1859.

POOR-LAW MEDICAL RELIEF.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am glad to find that certain union medical officers have at last come forward to enter their protest against the proposed Scheme for a New Arrangement of Medical Relief—a scheme which, if made law, might perhaps mend matters a little in one or two instances, but which, on the whole, I am persuaded, would act prejudicially to the whole system of medical relief in general, and to the medical officers in particular.

Payment per case is fraught with numberless objections and difficulties. There would be a constant bone of contention between the various parochial and the medical officers; the former trying their best to keep down, and the latter as eager to swell, the list of sick paupers. Between these two conflicting interests there could be no agreement, no co-operation, and the poor would be placed in a most unsatisfactory position.

Again, the clause which recommends the appointment of two medical officers, and gives the poor the choice, is decidedly bad in its tendency, and intricate in its working. The poor would not choose him who is most competent, but him who most liberally orders extra relief. The doctors *might* resort to a kind of canvass for the patronage of the poor, who, as everybody knows, are ever changeable, easily dissatisfied, and frequently unthankful. Altogether, I consider the guardians better able to exercise a discretionary power than the paupers. There is no fear of the poor not being properly attended to; for I believe it will be generally admitted that, whatever else may be said against boards of guardians, they are ever ready to listen to the complaints of the poor against the medical officers.

What the *uniform and definite system* is on which the salary for the workhouse is to be fixed, we are left to infer; but if the per-case payment principle is meant, I consider it particularly objectionable. As is well known, workhouses contain but very few really able-bodied inmates; they are generally filled with the ailing and infirm, who under the present system are kept off the sick list as much as possible, but who, when interest came to bear in the matter, might easily be made to increase the returns and fill the infirmary. If payment per case be resorted to, it ought to be calculated by inverse proportion.

I consider the present system of medical relief to be radically good, and to require but few alterations. I would suggest the following:—

1. A more uniform and definite system of payment throughout the various unions, which I think might be arranged without resorting to such an entire revolution as the payment-per-case project would involve.
2. A considerably increased extra-fee list.
3. I would allow the extra fees to the workhouse as well as

to the district medical officers. The fee ought to be considered as payment for the operation, which requires the same skill and care in one place as in another. If the district officer were to have the addition of mileage, all very well; but we must not forget that the district salaries are computed in the first instance (or ought to be) with mileage, as a considerable element in the calculation, which is not the case for the workhouse.

In conclusion, I would express my thanks and sense of admiration to Mr. Griffin for his disinterested conduct, although hitherto, I fear, he has laboured in vain.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Spilsby, Lincolnshire, Jan. 1859. JOHN WEST WALKER, M.B.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a member of the Committee of the Poor-law Medical Reform Association, I regret having been unable to attend a meeting which was summoned to be held at the Freemasons' Tavern, on Friday, the 14th inst.—I suppose for the purpose of taking into consideration the "Memorandum" of the President of the Poor-law Board. I trust such resolutions were arrived at as may guide Poor-law medical officers in giving a general negative to the plan proposed. So far as I am able to comprehend it, in the first place, I should object to a triennial election. What has that to do with a revision of salaries, according to the duties performed? The dominion of boards of guardians is quite irksome enough, without giving them the power to cancel an appointment at the end of a given period, or, at least, without the intervention of the Poor-law Board itself.

The plan is not objectionable of issuing a periodical list to medical officers of those in receipt of either permanent or temporary relief, (and who may demand the attention of the medical officer without an order,) as well as of cases of urgency; and though the plan suggested of making an allowance of 1s. 6d. per head on the permanent relief list, with an equivalent addition in the event of sickness, seems a fair proposal, yet how easily and simply our just complaints might be met by adopting, on an average of cases attended during the last three years, a scale upon which to found a fair and equitable salary, distance and density of population being taken into consideration. If a medical officer is paid a fair and liberal salary, there need be no provision made for "more expensive drugs and appliances." I should even dispense with all extras, except *midwifery*.

This brings me to the subject of the payment-per-case system, which would be a source of constant bickerings betwixt medical officers, relieving officers, and, consequently, guardians. This is well known from the difficulties thrown in the way in granting a midwifery order, or for an accident involving the payment of a fee. The present system of payment per salary I fully believe obviates all the inconveniences resulting to the poor by the immediate attention to a case, *without* an order, under a feeling of moral obligation on the part of the medical officer.

I do not wish to trespass further on your columns, though I might have something more to say on the subject of Poor-law Medical Relief, more especially on attendance upon workhouses, if these few observations are worthy of insertion from one who has held office for fifteen years.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

January, 1859.

SUUM CUIQUE.

I enclose my card.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—You have invited comments on the proposed alterations of the system of Poor-law Medical Relief, and have divided the subject into three heads: under these three heads I will, with your permission, sketch a system, radical in its nature, but, I believe, truly conservative in its tendencies.

The problems to be solved are—

- 1st. The public interests.
- 2nd. The welfare of the poor.
- 3rd. Professional interests.

All in the profession, and many out of it, are aware that the pauper class, entitled from their poverty to gratuitous medical services, form but a small section of those to whom such services are actually rendered; and although, under the present system, orders for medical attendance are distributed with a somewhat lavish hand, should a per-case payment, or salary based upon the per-case system, ever be adopted, it will become expedient, as it has always been desirable, to define the exact amount of poverty which constitutes pauperism.

The public interest demands that no living being should suffer from evitable sickness. The public interest requires that