A HUMANE OVERSEER—CORONER'S INQUEST.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I take the liberty of inclosing to you an account of a coroner's inquest, which was lately held not far distant from my residence. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

CHRISTOPHER LLEWELYN.

Llanymynech, Feb. 17, 1839.

(*Shrewsbury Chronicle*, Friday, Feb. 8, 1839.)—An inquest was held on Friday last, before C. M. D. Humphreys, Esq., Coroner, at the Plough Inn, Trewern, in the parish of Buttington, Montgomeryshire, on the body of a man unknown (supposed, however, to have come from the neighbourhood of Wednesbury, Staffordshire), who died in a state of the greatest destitution. The following evidence was adduced:—Thomas Williams, of Trewern, farmer:—I found the deceased about 8 o'clock in the morning in a field below my house, lying in the ditch, which was nearly full of water; he was quite cold and insensible—I took him into the building, and put him into some straw, and sent for the overseer; I returned again in about an hour, and found him in the same state as when I left him. Edward Davis, overseer:—I went to see him, (deceased) and found him in the barn, in the straw; he was very cold and unable to answer my questions; I had him removed into an adjoining cottage, and gave him a jug of elder wine; he appeared very weak and ill; in a week after I sent for Mr. Maurice Jones, surgeon, of Pool, to see him. This witness, upon cross-examination, admitted that he allowed this poor creature not only to remain a week without medical aid, but during the whole period of his being at the cottage, to lie on straw, without bed, blankets, or any suitable covering whatever. Mr. Maurice Lloyd Jones, surgeon, Welshpool, said—about a week or nine days ago the overseer came to my house and requested me to see deceased. I found him in a state of the greatest debility; he appeared to have suffered very much from cold and the want of the common necessities of life; his toe was frost-bitten, and upon examination of his back, I found an extensive slough on either side of the sacrum; there was also a circular patch of inflammation on one of the scapulæ; these marks, in my opinion, were probably caused from his having been confined for a length of time upon his back. He could give no answer to my questions, and appeared to be deficient in intellect. I ordered him every proper nourishment and support, which I have reason to believe he had after my visit. I only saw him once. In my opinion the deceased died from natural causes. The

Coroner briefly addressed the jury, and observed that after the very able evidence of Mr. Jones, they would have no difficulty, in this unfortunate case, of coming to a satisfactory conclusion.—Verdict, "Died by the visitation of God."

THE NEXT COUNCIL

OF THE

MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—You have ever been a consistent champion of the best interests of the profession, and of the "so-called" general practitioner, in particular, who is, *in general*, too culpably indifferent to them. With these impressions, I venture to call your attention to the coming election at the *Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society*, of officers and Council for the ensuing year.

In the mode of election there has been great reason for complaint, inasmuch as a balloting-list has been always prepared by the Council, and, unless a faction get up an opposition (which would be much to be deprecated) this list is invariably proposed and carried.

The Council, you will perceive, are, thus, a *self-perpetuating body*. This is wrong. In the present Council, 21 in number, there is but *one general practitioner*, Mr. Davis, of Hampstead.

The laws of this Society say, "That there shall not be a greater proportion of members practising pharmacy than one-third of the whole." If, then, it be found expedient to admit them to the body, let the same principle be carried out, and one-third of the members of Council be general practitioners. This is just, and though it may be that *this* year the appeal will be in vain, yet, ultimately, it will, nay, it *must*, be conceded.

May I beg you to notice this point in your next, if possible, as the election is on the 1st of March.—I have the honour to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient servant,

PHILO-JUSTITIAE.

P.S. I understand that Dr. Clendinning resigns the Secretaryship on *principle*, considering that it ought not to be held for years by the same individual, "*Auspicium melioris ævi*."