

SHIP-SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—All of us lament the wretched pay to ship surgeons, and the subject has given rise to many very indignant letters to THE LANCET, in every variety of style—bold, fierce, pitiful, and even pious, interlarded with scraps of questionable Latin, and very silly extracts; yet, strange to say, no one has given you the *cause* and *remedy*! With your permission, I shall supply this vital deficiency.

Did ever any of the letter-writers to THE LANCET say there are, and always have been, medical men, duly qualified, “plenty as blackberries,” offering their services to owners of ships, brokers, and others, merely for a passage to New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Port Natal, the Cape, &c.? At this moment there is not a single house of the least importance in the city of London but that has abundance of names, “free-passage men,” at twenty-four hours’ call. Dear LANCET, who has bred, protects, and preserves the system but surgeons themselves? Not a week but I am cognizant of the most extraordinary conduct of medical men in this way. No later than Saturday last a splendid ship left this port, and the medical man accepted, *after paying his passage*, a case of instruments, (£5 5s.) to take charge of 100 emigrants. Give my name freely to any honourable man, and I will give him proofs in abundance—aye, a hundred; and the worst of the matter is, that such men invariably damage others at the very time we are endeavouring to effect an arrangement with the House.

Now for the remedy—*safe, simple, and certain*. Let no medical man accept an appointment without he is fairly paid, say £10 per month, out and home. The writer has given it many times. Let *every one* do this, and there would be an end of all the whining letters on bad pay to ship-surgeons.

From first to last, and without an exception to the rule, medical men are alone to blame.

Yours truly,

Tower hill, Jan. 1853.

AN OLD SHIP-SURGEON.

KING'S COLLEGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Two or three letters have already appeared in your paper concerning the management of the affairs of the King's College medical department, more particularly as regards the dissecting-room. It has been said that a newspaper is not a proper resource to fly to in our troubles, and that we must not expect redress for the grievances we complain of, unless we choose to state them boldly and openly to the proper authorities. In this manner they save themselves a vast deal of trouble, and appear to be pursuing a proper line of conduct; but is it not manifest, that so long as their conduct is not outrageous, so long will a general rising of the students be checked? For there is nothing more difficult to effect than a combined movement of young men against their teachers and superiors, however just may be their cause of complaint. But at the same time the students suffer; and it appears to me that the only way to help them, when as a body they find it difficult to help themselves, is to produce some movement *ab extra*—by the publicity of *facts* compel the heads of the College to pay some attention to the dissatisfaction so generally manifested throughout the medical department. One or two of these facts I may mention: For some time there has been but one Demonstrator of Anatomy in the dissecting-room; and that, for days, with one exception, that demonstrator has not made his appearance till after one o'clock. Now, I counted well-nigh upon forty men dissecting this morning, and yet at one o'clock the demonstrator had not yet appeared to assist or superintend them; and even, had he been present all the time, do you think one man, however diligent, would suffice for the many? Now what remedy have we? If we speak to the demonstrator, he will refer us to the dean—the dean to the principal—the principal to the Council—and soon—with a very distant looming of a settlement. Our only other chance would be with the Professor of Anatomy; but here again we fail, for the clever men don't require assistance, or don't feel the want of assistance so much, and the working men are plodders, and afraid to speak, with but one or two exceptions. In short, nothing can be done without combination at least from within. Our only resource, therefore, Sir, is in your influence, which may perhaps make them at least look to the cause of complaint, however little they may like to remedy it.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently, and

King's College, Jan. 1853.

A SUFFERER.

THE HEMEL HEMPSTEAD CORONERSHIP.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—You have been kind enough on several occasions to insert notices relative to this coronership, and to express an interest therein. I therefore have much pleasure in directing your attention to the law reports of this morning's papers—the *Times*, *Daily News*, or *Herald*; you will there see that the rule *nisi*, which Mr. Campbell Foster obtained on the part of Mr. Pope, on the last day of the last term, was on Saturday made *absolute*, on the objection that had been taken to the informal nature of the oath that was administered to the Boxmoor voters. The question, whether these voters have any legal estate in the Moor, it was agreed to argue as a special case some time next term.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Jan. 21, 1852.

MEDICUS.

THE SYDENHAM SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As one of the four or five members present at the last annual meeting of the Council of the Sydenham Society, allow me to thank “Antepithesis” for his letter in your columns of January 8th.

As regards the resolution alluded to, I am free to confess that I did not anticipate for an instant being able to carry it when I proposed it; but I certainly congratulated myself exceedingly that a move in the right direction had been obtained, (to wit, an increased publicity to the day on which the annual meeting would be held,) by the adoption of the amendment. My surprise was equally great with that of “Antepithesis,” in finding it had been disregarded.

I have been informed, Sir, that the Society is not so prosperous as it should be. Can it be wondered at, when such hole-and-corner elections of the new members of the Council are perpetrated.

There is, however, another view of the matter that should be taken. I have heard the remark made, that the Society's works are not sufficiently practical; and, as a general rule, I must consider the statement to be correct. But, Sir, can this be wondered at? Who constitute the Council? Learned men, I admit; witness their translations. But are they not all either pure surgeons or physicians? And what sympathy can, or does exist, between them and the great body of the members?—to wit, the general practitioners? Can they, do they, know our intellectual wants? How much time, I would ask, has the general practitioner at his disposal to read abstruse publications? But it will be said, this Society is essentially a scientific one. Granted; but we live in an eminently practical age; and with all due deference to the gentlemen of the Council, I am not of opinion that they can be judges of our requirements. But enough of this; what I have advocated, and shall continue to do, is, that as there is an annual meeting, it should be as large as possible; and that, as a consequence thereof, some infusion of new matter in the constitution of the Council should be attempted; or, Sir, I feel that the time is not far distant when a Society which might be rendered a great boon to the profession, were all petty, selfish interests discarded, will die of inanition.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Dean-street, Jan. 1853.

JOS. ROGERS.

THE APPRENTICESHIP CLAUSE OF THE APOTHECARIES' ACT.

THE following letter has been addressed by Mr. Upton, the legal adviser of the Society of Apothecaries, to a correspondent who inquired whether he could be admitted to examination by the Court of Examiners without producing an indenture of apprenticeship:—

Apothecaries' Hall, Jan. 22, 1853.

SIR,—The inquiry contained in your letter is so fairly and properly made, that I depart from an established rule, and reply to an anonymous inquirer.

The necessity for a five years' apprenticeship arises, not from any regulation of the Court of Examiners, but from the express requirement of the Act of Parliament. The Court of Examiners, therefore, have no power to dispense with the requirement. At the same time, the Court have always been anxious to carry out the spirit of the enactment, and not to put a narrow or exclusive construction upon it; and they are, therefore, prepared to admit any candidate to examination who can adduce satisfactory evidence of his having served after the manner of an apprentice with a qualified apothecary. What evidence would be deemed by the Court satisfactory in any given instance, must depend upon

the circumstances of the particular case; but if the Court are satisfied that the student has conducted his medical studies under the direction and control of a legally-qualified apothecary, in such a manner that the relation of master and apprentice has substantially existed between the parties, the Court will admit the candidate for examination, notwithstanding the absence of an indenture of apprenticeship.

The Society would be exceedingly glad that the requirement of an apprenticeship in all cases should be no longer demanded; and they have omitted no fitting opportunity of representing to the Government the desirableness of a change in this respect; but while the law remains in its present state, the Society are of course bound to conform to it.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
ROBERT B. UPTON, Clerk to the Society.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.—The following gentlemen, having undergone the necessary examinations for the diploma, were admitted Members of the College at the meeting of the Court of Examiners, on the 28th ult.:—

ANCELL, MALCOLM CURRIE, Norfolk-crescent, Hyde-park.
BALDING, DANIEL BARLEY, Barkway, Herts.
BARNES, GEORGE ROBINSON, Leadwell, Oxfordshire.
HANDSLEY, THOMAS ARTINDALE, Alford, Lincolnshire.
PHILEOTT, HENRY GRAYS, Brighton.

At the same meeting of the Court, Messrs. GEORGE FLETCHER BANKS, and JOHN NORRIE, passed their examination for naval surgeons. These gentlemen had previously been admitted Members of the College, their diplomas bearing date respectively, November 26, 1847, and July 30, 1849.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of gentlemen who passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise on

Thursday, January 27th, 1853.

MOORE, CHARLES FREDERICK, Dublin.
TWEESDALE, ALFRED, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire.
WOODD, CHARLES GEORGE, Bromley, Kent.

THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SOCIETY.—At the ordinary meeting of this Society, to be held on Monday, February 7th, at half-past eight, P.M., at 53, Berners-street, a paper "On the Influence of Noxious Effluvia in Generating and Propagating Epidemic Diseases," by R. D. Grainger, Esq., will be read. We are requested to state that the queries of the Epizootic Committee, or those of any of the other committees of this society, may be obtained from either of the hon. secretaries, Dr. McWilliam, 14, Trinity-square, Tower-hill, or Mr. Tucker, 38, Berners-street, Oxford-street, and not from the President, Dr. Buckingham, as announced in a former number.

PRESENTATION TO DR. SINCLAIR, J.P., WICK.—On the evening of the last day of the year, 1852, a numerous meeting of the friends of Dr. Sinclair, acting as a committee of management for a testimonial to him, met in the Wellington Hotel.

The Rev. Mr. Whyte, of Canisbay, was called to the chair, who first produced and read to the meeting a note addressed to the Chairman from James Mackenzie, Esq., procurator fiscal of the county, who had kindly acted as cashier and secretary of the committee, stating that an unavoidable engagement prevented his attendance at this meeting, enclosing also the money accounts, &c., that had been deposited in his hand, and suggesting that the accounts should all be summed up, and the money collected and presented in a purse to the doctor, to be laid out by him in whatever way he may think best for a testimonial from the subscribers.

The Chairman then, in name of the meeting, briefly addressed the doctor, expressing his own grateful sense of the honour conferred upon him, of presiding at this large and highly respectable meeting, and of expressing, to the best of his humble abilities, the sentiments of esteem and admiration for the doctor's rare and varied attainments and accomplishments, that have called forth this demonstration in his behalf. That his refined taste and scientific pursuits have gained him the respect and esteem, not only of his neighbours and acquaintances who are able to appreciate such attainments, but of strangers from all parts of the kingdom and from foreign lands, who spend many pleasant hours in visiting the large and splendid museum of natural history and antiquarian value, prepared and collected by his own hand;—that his high

talents and abilities in his profession, combined as they are with prompt and seemingly intuitive decision for every occasion, together with his self-denying perseverance and readiness at every call from high or low, rich or poor, have endeared him in the hearts and established him in the confidence of those who have the benefit of his assistance, so that, while his visits, whether professional or social, are cordially welcomed in the mansions of the great and noble throughout the county, his ready skill and sympathetic tenderness make his visits regarded as those of a pitying and ministering angel in the cottage of the labourer and the hovel of the pauper. That it was chiefly from those of the middle and labouring classes that subscriptions for this testimonial have been derived, and the collectors one and all report that almost each individual subscription has been given with the most cordial good-will, and with the earnest wish that thrice the amount could have been given; and in presenting the Doctor with the purse and its contents, he begged in name of the 2500 subscribers that he would esteem it less for its intrinsic value, than as a token and pledge of their confidence and esteem.

Dr. Sinclair then replied in a suitable address.

INSANITY AMONGST THE WORKING CLASSES.—An official report just published by the parochial authorities of Marylebone, states that insanity has lately increased to such an extent amongst the working classes, that none but those whose duties bring them in contact with the sufferers can form an idea of its fearful spread. There are now no less than 494 chargeable to the parish. In St. Pancras, insanity also prevails to an unusual amount, especially amongst the humbler classes. It is to be hoped that this painful fact will be made the subject of official and medical inquiry, with a view to tracing its origin, and to retard, if possible, its progress.

BATH UNITED HOSPITAL.—At the annual meeting of this institution, P. B. Duncan, Esq., in the chair, it was stated that during the year the in- and out-patients numbered 13,976. The receipts amounted to £5739 14s., and the expenditure to £3536 5s. The following gentlemen were elected vice-presidents for the ensuing year:—Sir W. Cockburn, Bart., Sir Robert Preston, Bart., Sir H. Johnson, Bart., — Langton, Esq., M.P., — Walmersley, Esq., and T. H. King, Esq.

THE MAGISTRACY.—The Lords Justices have appointed to the commission of the peace Thomas Kane, Esq., M.D., the late mayor—an appointment which we are sure will give general satisfaction.—*Clare Examiner.*

SUSSEX AND BRIGHTON EYE INFIRMARY.—The annual meeting of this Infirmary took place in the board-room last Friday—J. Mills, Esq., in the chair. During the year there were admitted 1359, being a considerable increase of patients on the previous year. The late Clement Deacon, Esq., bequeathed £448 17s. 6d., and N. A. H. T. presented a donation of £100. The subscriptions figured £206 14s., and the expenditure £29 9s. 8d.; exclusive of which there were £154 11s. in the Savings Bank, and £448 17s. Three per Cent. Consols. Two wings were lately added to the Infirmary, which increased the beds to twenty-eight.

ENLARGEMENT OF BETHLEHEM HOSPITAL.—Two new wings—the one on the south side, the other on the north—both facing Brook-street, and capable of accommodating 500 additional patients, have just been added to the original building. This additional increase of accommodation is attributable to the exposures of the discipline of the hospital which have lately taken place.

HEALTH OF OUR TROOPS AT THE SEAT OF WAR.—At Martaban, the seat of the Burmese war, out of 2000 men, the strength of the forces there, close on 1200 were in the hospital. There was not even a relief of guards and picquets, and the General refused to send more men; so the poor fellows were frequently six days out of seven on duty, and had to go on again at the eighth.

FRENCH MEDICAL ETIQUETTE.—A curious question of etiquette has risen amongst the members of the College of Medicine. It was Baron Portal, the first physician of Louis XVIII., who obtained a grant for the College from the king. The members of the Academy, as a token of gratitude, resolved that the king's first physician should in future be always the Honorary President of the Academy of Medicine. The Baron Portal, in accordance with this resolution, presided once or twice. The question was not raised during the Monarchy of July, and of course it was not heard of during the Republic. Dr. Conneau, the first physician of the Emperor, now becomes of right the Honorary President of the Academy.