

or injury from his ignorance, or to protect the regularly educated professional man from competition with such pretenders." Now, let me, for the sake of correctness, state, that the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow possess a charter (granted them, I believe, by James VI., and subsequently confirmed by Act of Parliament) which empowers them to prevent *any individual* practising surgery either in the city of Glasgow or in the *three or four* adjoining counties, unless he has obtained a certificate of *qualification* from their body and their licence to practise. It is of *no consequence* whether the individual is ignorant or well-informed, *possessing diplomas* from other *bodies* or not, he is liable (unless he has the licence in question) to a penalty of 40*l.* for *every* surgical act he may have performed within the limits mentioned. In great haste I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Glasgow, March 8, 1844. M. D.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE POOR-LAW COMMISSIONERS
ON
UNION MEDICAL OFFICERS' QUALIFICATIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If the enclosed correspondence with the Poor-Law Commissioners, on the subject of the qualifications necessary for union medical officers, is of any service to your readers, it is at your disposal. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

THOMAS WILSON.

Hornsea, March 11, 1844.

To the Commissioners of the New Poor-Law.

Gentlemen,—May I beg your consideration of the following case:—

I received a letter, January 24th, 1844, from the board of guardians of the Skirlaugh Union, Holderness, stating that an election was to take place for the office of surgeon for the Hornsea district of that union. The surgeon then in office being a person holding *no diploma or qualification whatever*, except the negative one of having practised as an apothecary previous to the act of 1815, I imagined the guardians intended to choose a surgeon qualified according to your "order" of the 12th of March, 1842, and became a candidate in consequence of possessing the necessary diplomas. The election took place on Friday last, and, much to my surprise, the individual holding the appointment, and, as I stated, not possessing qualifications consistent with your order, was re-elected, although two regularly qualified medical men belonging to the district were candidates for the same. May I be allowed to ask the question, whether the appointment is consistent with your "order" respecting the qualifications necessary for union surgeons, and meets with your sanction and approbation? An answer will oblige, Gentlemen, your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS WILSON,
Member of the Royal College of Surgeons,
London, and Licentiate of the Apothecaries' Company, London, &c.

Hornsea, Holderness, near Hull,
Feb. 13, 1844.

Poor-Law Commission Office, Somerset House,
February 16th, 1844.

Sir,—I am directed by the Poor-Law Commissioners to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, relative to the proceedings of the board of guardians of the Skirlaugh Union, in regard to the election of a medical officer for the Hornsea district of the Skirlaugh Union, and I am to state that the same shall receive the consideration of the Commissioners. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

GEO. COODE, Assistant-Secretary.

Thomas Wilson, Esq., Surgeon, &c.,
Hornsea, Holderness, near Hull.

To the Poor-Law Commissioners.

Gentlemen,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th, respecting the election of a medical officer for the Hornsea district of the Skirlaugh Union,

and to thank you for taking the same into consideration. I shall esteem it a favour if you will acquaint me with your decision when formed upon the case. With great respect, I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient servant,
THOMAS WILSON.

Hornsea, near Hull, Feb. 26, 1844.

Poor-Law Commission Office, Somerset House,
9th March, 1844.

Sir,—I am directed by the Poor-Law Commissioners to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ult., and to state that they had had under their consideration your letter of the 13th ult., and in reference thereto, I am instructed to inform you that the arrangement which the guardians of the Skirlaugh Union have made for medical attendance upon the sick poor of the Hornsea district for the ensuing year, has been reported to the commissioners, and they are informed that the guardians wish to continue the services of the medical man who now holds the office.

The commissioners are aware that the present medical officer does not possess the full legal qualifications acquired by yourself, but, having been in actual practice prior to 1815, the commissioners consider that he comes within the definition of a "medical officer," contained in the 109th section of the Poor-Law Amendment Act, that is, "a person duly licensed to practice as a medical man." The present medical officer stands in the position contemplated by article 5 of the general medical order, as being an existing officer "duly licensed to practice, whom the guardians, with the consent of the commissioners, wish to continue in office, and the commissioners having acquiesced, the arrangement made by the guardians is consistent with the general rule of the commissioners, a copy of which is herewith enclosed for your information and reference. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

GEO. COODE, Assistant-Secretary.

Thomas Wilson, Esq., Surgeon, &c.,
Hornsea, Holderness, Hull.

"Article 5.—General Medical Order.

"Provided also, that it shall be lawful for the board of guardians, with the consent of the Poor-Law Commissioners first had and obtained, to continue in office any medical officer, duly licensed to practice as a medical man, already employed by any such board of guardians, although such medical officer may not be qualified in one of the four modes required by Article 3."

LETTER FROM AN ARMY SURGEON TO THE COUNCIL OF THE COLLEGE.

GENTLEMEN,—As a member of the College, of thirty-one years standing, and a certificated army surgeon of thirteen years previous thereto, I assume the right of addressing you on the subject of the great injustice I (with many others more worthy) have experienced at your hands, in the selection, by the power vested in you by your new anomalous *monstrum horrendum*, &c., misnamed a charter. First presuming that the selected, as well as yourselves, are "all honourable men," I will commence my statement, and observations thereon. In 1800, when I had been two years assistant-surgeon in a cavalry regiment, and stood on a par in the profession with my friends and confrères, Messrs. Vincent, Earle, and S. Cooper, &c., who, choosing the wiser part, remained in the hospitals at home. I took a more dangerous course, but am I less an hospital surgeon because I walked the hospitals abroad?—Roasting at Gibraltar, frying at Malta, and stewing in Egypt; mingling with the wounded, the dying, and the dead; with gaunt plague and pestilence surrounding us on every side; dressing from thirty to forty compound fractures twice a-day, operations, &c.; having no time for repose; to this the present Dr. John Webb, with whom I walked the battle-field, can testify, and the experienced Sir James M'Grigor confirm.* But now let

* At Gibraltar, 48 surgical cases in hospital, and 213 on board the *Guerriere*; at Malta, 80, with the late Mr. Tegart; in Egypt, 210 men and 5 officers, all wounded this day forty-three years ago; and, subsequently, 776 ophthalmic cases in hospital at Gizeh.