

service. An eye-witness reports that the solemnity was graced by the presence of the Minister-of-War and all the highest officers of the French army. "The candidates for distinction are all officers or subalterns, having already served, and the object of competition is the diploma of 'Monitor,' or rather the degree of 'Bachelor of Agility,' which is conferred upon the most dexterous in manly sports, with the view of securing the appointment of gymnastic master in one or other of the regiments of the French army. The institution of Joinville confines itself entirely to the instruction of gymnastics and other bodily exercises, whether imparting strength, skill, or grace, according to the system here adopted. We are surprised that every soldier in the French service is not an Admirable Crichton. The perfection of the Zouaves no longer astonishes, and we cannot wonder at the clumsy inferiority of the British soldier, from whom such instruction as imparted at Joinville is withheld, and who consequently knows only how to present himself before the enemy, and hangs back with awkward bashfulness when ushered suddenly into the company of friends. Here we have grown-up bronzed and bearded men, warriors who have stormed the heights of Alma and rushed on Malakoff, competing together for an 'accessit' in fencing, boxing, single-stick, and even dancing!"

It is thus the efficiency of the soldiers may be increased, at the same time that their health is consulted. We are glad to learn that the Duke of Cambridge has given orders for the introduction of a somewhat similar system into our army.

Correspondence.

"Audialteram partem."

PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUMS: RUCK *VERSUS* STILWELL.

(LETTER FROM DR. CONOLLY.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Although I could not read the able article in THE LANCET of Saturday, the 2nd inst., without some pain, I am quite sensible of the delicacy, and even of the kindness of feeling, with which you have animadverted on what you, perhaps not unreasonably, consider to have been wrong, or at least unfortunate, connected with Mr. Ruck, as exhibited in the recent cause of Ruck *versus* Stilwell. I wish, as much as you can do, that arrangements could be made for the insane, above the class of paupers, which would not expose those practising in insanity to the suspicion of acting from motives merely mercenary; but can you, after all the consideration you may have given to it, suggest how this is to be effected? I have myself repeatedly reflected upon it, but I confess to being quite unable to see how the difficulty is to be removed. I looked with the utmost interest to Lord Shaftesbury's evidence for some information. His great experience, his high character, his large benevolence, and the recollection of much kindness shown to me, had prepared me to receive every word that fell from him with a kind of instinctive and respectful assent. But I was painfully disappointed. I found only immeasurable condemnation of those interested in private asylums, and in the substitutes for private asylums nothing practicable suggested. The general suspicion of interested motives must always remain attached to institutions, as well as to men, in which or by whom anything whatever is done for profit or for payment; and the chartered institutions spoken of so highly by Lord Shaftesbury would not be less liable to it than a private asylum; nor would the public have any greater security for the good and honest management of these public institutions. My trust in human nature and in the character of men is greater than Lord Shaftesbury's; and I still firmly believe, what his Lordship so emphatically denies, that a man may be the proprietor of an asylum, and yet actuated by honourable motives; that a physician's pride and pleasure in seeing an

insane patient restored to reason under his care may be greater than his concern for the loss of the moderate profit arising from the anxious care and treatment that led to recovery.

You well know, Mr. Editor—quite as well as I do,—that the treatment of the insane comprehends much more than physic; that mere drugs are of small avail; and that the days of head-shaving, and antimony, and low diet, have passed away. The insane require a cheerful residence, a house adapted at once for their protection, and possessing everything which has a tendency to promote their recovery or their amendment; to improve their bodily health; to give repose to the nervous system; to cheer and revive the affections; and to restore the oppressed or bewildered intellect to healthy life. It would be a cruel mistake to reckon securely on such advantages being presented in the chartered houses—houses erected at the public cost, and partly supported by the county rate. Such homes as the insane require can only be properly regulated by medical men, whom the committees of such institutions would generally regard with the meanest jealousy. The head of an asylum constituting such homes as are required must always be a medical man, and one of high and liberal qualifications, skilled in all that relates to the mind as well as to the body, and appreciating everything that affects either or both. Every arrangement for persons of disordered mind, great or trifling, must really be based on physiology and mental philosophy, as well as on medical science. It is this which makes it essential that asylums should be entirely regulated by the physician; and from this it arises that a physician must be able to offer such a home for insane patients, and that private asylums are really indispensable to the public.

It is most earnestly to be hoped that the evidence given by Lord Shaftesbury with respect to substituting public institutions for private asylums, will be most carefully considered before any new legislative measure is resolved upon. If I am not altogether mistaken, it will be seen that even if public institutions could be raised, they would be open to far more, and more serious, objections than private asylums. There has been enough of declamation on this subject, and it is time for the exercise of some wisdom and judgment. At present, the proprietors of asylums know not what to expect; and it seems to be quite forgotten that whatever ruins them will be to a great extent fatal to the insane.

For a long time I have entertained a hopeful expectation of seeing asylums founded for patients of the educated classes, whose circumstances were very limited. I had the honour to be associated with Lord Shaftesbury, and with Mr. Tite, and other excellent persons, many years ago, in an attempt to establish one. Lord Shaftesbury's evidence records how signally the attempt failed. Our trust in the public was found to be too sanguine, and assuredly that trust cannot prudently be transferred to the guardians of the county rate. If any really practicable plan could be devised, free from all the supposed temptations and evils of private asylums, it would receive the generous support of the whole medical profession, and I would willingly devote the years remaining to me to making every effort to carry it into effect.

Your observations on the case of Ruck *v.* Stilwell had a material relation to this important question, and I trust I have stated it not unfairly. Permit me, in conclusion, to say one word more in reference to Mr. Ruck's case. When a medical man signs a certificate of a patient's insanity, the certificate is never addressed to any particular asylum. The patient's friends determine on the asylum, and designate it in the order signed by them. Their choice is often quite independent of the advice given by the certifier; but if the medical man is consulted about it, he ought always to be prepared to recommend an asylum which he knows to be deserving of confidence. It is a general rule that when a certificate is presented at an asylum in which the medical man signing it is interested, it is not acted upon. Another is procured in its stead. The first certificate remains valid as a general opinion, but is inoperative as to that particular asylum. By some accident my certificate in Mr. Ruck's case, which was one calling for prompt interference, was received at Moorcroft, and was afterwards overlooked by the Commissioners in Lunacy. This inadvertence, although inflicting no injury or wrong on Mr. Ruck, has been bitterly paid for, and vindictively punished; yet Mr. Ruck lies under a deep moral obligation to the proprietors of Moorcroft for their immediate reception of him, for the immediate protection they threw around him, for the comfortable and secure home they afforded him, and for all the care which contributed so far to restore intellect to him as to enable him to devise the means of being both unjust and revengeful. The possible calamity from which he was thus screened, perhaps

the crime and the penalty, although inconceivable to his morbidly constructed mind, will be admitted by everyone who reads his history, and is conversant with the ways of madmen.

If I may presume to allude to the limited exertions of my own professional life, they have assuredly manifested no wish to injure the insane; and, when occasion required it, I have not shrunk from defending their cause, without regarding the consequences to myself. No man feels a greater jealousy of interfering with any man's liberty than I do; but liberty to do evil must not be permitted; liberty to treat a family with cruel neglect; liberty to waste property, and to endanger the personal safety of other people. We may incur obloquy for doing our duty in such cases, but the duty itself is plain and undeniable, and must be done, whatever the cost. I trust that the many honourable men engaged in a high department of medical study and practice will not be deterred, any more than I shall allow myself to be, from performing this duty—a duty to the public—in any future instance, let the consequences be what they may.

I remain, Sir, your very obedient servant,
Hanwell, July, 1859. J. CONOLLY, M.D.

THE TITLE OF "DOCTOR."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following correspondence relative to the new licentiates of the Edinburgh College of Physicians we hope you will consider of sufficient importance to publish. We refrain from adding any comments of our own at present.

In answer to a letter to Professor Christison we received the following reply:—

"Edinburgh, May 19th, 1859.

GENTLEMEN,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, in which you ask me, as a Professor of the University of Edinburgh, "whether the licence which has been sold for £10 by the College of Physicians of Edinburgh to certain practitioners of medicine and surgery in England, confers on them the legal right of assuming the title of Doctor?" In reply, I have to inform you that the licence of the College of Physicians does not confer any such right; and that, in Scotland, the right of assuming the title of Doctor can be acquired by a medical man only by graduation at a university.

I am your most obedient servant,
To ———. R. CHRISTISON.

In answer to a letter to Dr. F. Hawkins, informing him that two gentlemen of the town who had recently obtained the licence of the Edinburgh College of Physicians were calling themselves, on their door-plates and visiting cards, Doctors; and that his receipt for 5s. (registration fee for this new qualification), in which they were styled Doctor, was being handed about as the highest authority for their assumption of the title; and asking if these gentlemen had really a right to be called Doctors, or if the title had been inserted accidentally,—the following was received:—

"Medical Registration Office, June 3rd, 1859.

GENTLEMEN,—In reply to your communication just received, I beg to say that a licentiate of a college of physicians, not being a graduate of a university, is not a doctor of medicine by legal right, and can be only called Doctor by courtesy.

But as the courtesy is customary, and is, in fact, recommended by long prescription and usage, I have not hitherto seen reason to depart from it, except in documents of a strictly formal character, which a mere receipt for money is not.

I do not designate a licentiate, as above described, as M.D. in the Register, or in any certified copy of the Register.

I am, Gentlemen, yours faithfully,
To Drs. Lake, Scott, and Aldridge. FRANCIS HAWKINS.

Graduates to Professor Christison.

"DEAR SIR,—We beg to thank you for your communication of the 19th instant, respecting the right of licentiates of the College of Physicians, Edinburgh, to call themselves Doctors. Allow us again to trouble you in the matter. Two gentlemen of this town have recently obtained the above licence, and have assumed, both on their cards and on their door-plates, the title of Doctor. They defend this assumption by a receipt from Dr. F. Hawkins for the registration fee, which runs thus: 'Received of Dr. ———,' &c. This document they hand about as an official recognition of their right to the title by the highest authority. We have written to Dr. F. Hawkins, stating the

matter, and have received the unsatisfactory answer which is enclosed.

We must further observe that the public are quite unable to comprehend the distinction between a M.D. of Edinburgh and a licentiate of a College, who call themselves Doctors of Edinburgh, and that thus an injury is inflicted, not only on ourselves, but indirectly on the University itself.

Under these circumstances, we hope you will, both as a member of the Council and a professor of the University, give us your advice in the matter, or how far the University of Edinburgh itself is inclined or able to protect the rights of its graduates.

We beg to remain your obedient servants,

GEO. A. K. LAKE.

GEO. SCOTT.

JOHN H. ALDRIDGE."

Graduates to Dr. F. Hawkins.

"Southampton, 9th June, 1859.

SIR,—We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd inst. We cannot help expressing our surprise that you should not consider your receipt for money as a document of strictly formal character, as it appears to us that all communications relating to medical qualifications and titles emanating from the Medical Registration Office are necessarily strictly official. That the two gentlemen of this town, who have lately bought the licence of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, consider your receipt as a formal document, is evident by the fact of their showing this paper to their friends and acquaintances in proof of their right to assume the title of Doctor. It was because they were using your money receipt as a formal acknowledgment of their legal right to style themselves Doctors that we took the liberty of addressing you in our last, and we must candidly state that we are by no means satisfied with the ambiguous answer with which you have favoured us.

We have always looked upon your office as one formed for the purpose of enabling both the profession and the public to ascertain without difficulty, and on authority without appeal, the positions and title which each member of the profession is legally right to assume. If, therefore, you do not deem the licentiates of the Edinburgh College of Physicians entitled to be formally registered as doctors, is it right that they should show your money receipt to the world as a legal proof of their right to style themselves such on their door-plates and cards?

We beg to remain your obedient servants,

GEO. A. K. LAKE.

GEO. SCOTT.

JOHN H. ALDRIDGE."

Dr. F. Hawkins to Graduates.

"Medical Registration Office, June 14th, 1859.

Dr. Francis Hawkins presents his compliments to the gentlemen who have addressed him from Southampton, and begs to tell them that, although he is sorry to discontinue a courtesy which, under the sanction of no slight authority, he has been accustomed for many years to observe, since it seems that in some instances an attempt has been made to take an improper advantage of it, he has directed that in letters and receipts sent from this office no person shall be addressed as doctor who has not taken the degree of M.D."

Professor Christison to Graduates.

"Edinburgh, June 16th, 1859.

GENTLEMEN,—In answer to your letter of June 19th, I beg to inform you that I am not aware of any right, either in law or in courtesy, by which a licentiate of the Edinburgh College of Physicians can call himself Doctor, unless he is also a graduate of a university. You are well enough aware of the usage in society,—not unknown in England, but more common in Scotland, where there is a far larger proportion of graduates,—according to which almost every medical man is familiarly spoken of, and addressed by unprofessional persons, as Doctor. You probably also know that the Medical Act of last year does not prevent a man from calling himself Doctor, provided he do not call himself Doctor of Medicine. Hence any of the new licentiates may, in strict legal phrase, call himself Doctor, because anybody whatever may do the same—even a low quack.

But in Scotland there is neither law nor courtesy to support the pretension of an ungraduated licentiate of the Edinburgh College of Physicians to be called or to call himself, in any formal way,—as, for example, on his door-plate, or in announcing himself on going into company,—Doctor. The