

set forth in a recent letter of a distinguished F.R.S. in our own ranks, to the Earl of Rosse, were honestly redressed, though the redress came late, than for the Fellows to clamour ever so loudly for this man or that to rule and guide them. Justice, retributive justice, is a glorious jewel, which would more decorate the front of the Royal Society than a list of the fairest names for office-bearers.

A CASE of some importance to the general practitioner, and particularly to licentiates of the Society of Apothecaries, has been recently decided in the courts of law. A medical man holding the extra-urban licence of the Apothecaries' Society only, but practising in London, sued a London patient for payment for a professional attendance. The parties refused to pay, and it was argued that the apothecary not having the London licence was, *quoad* the metropolis, an unqualified practitioner, and unable to sue legally for payment, under the Apothecaries' Act. The judge, however, over-ruled this, and the verdict was in favour of the medical man. So far as we are aware, this is the first case of the kind. It is a precedent in favour of considering apothecaries licensed to practise in England and Wales, exclusive of the metropolis, legal practitioners in London, so far as the recovery of debts are concerned. This is an important point.

This judicial decision may affect the funds of the Apothecaries' Society. Young men going up for examination will be apt to inquire what are the benefits conferred upon them by the London licence, for which they have to pay an extra fee. It is now on record that they are in the eye of the law not one whit less legally qualified, or less entitled to recover, without the special London licence. The only thing a man practising in London with the extra-urban licence would have to bear would be the chance of prosecution at the instance of the Society. It remains to be seen whether any prosecution of this kind will emanate from Blackfriars. We are in hopes this decision from the Bench may do away with the absurd distinction between London and Provincial Practitioners under the Apothecaries' Act. It is high time that such an absurdity should be abolished.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE PROPOSED INCORPORATION OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The extreme vanity (I had almost used a stronger term) of one of your correspondents in last week's LANCET, on the subject of the admission of the general practitioners as M.B.'s of the University of London, without examination, is, I trust, without a parallel. The graduates of that university are, it seems, in his opinion, at one extreme of the profession, and the general practitioners at the other. A more insane, inapt letter I never perused. I cannot conceive in what manner he can support his opinion, that the London graduates hold a position in the profession so much elevated above that of the well-educated general practitioner. I speak, of course, of those who possess the double qualification, who, I believe, now constitute, despite Mr. Bird's statement to the contrary, the great majority of the general practitioners. The examination by the Society of Apothecaries is eminently practical, and well calculated to test a candidate's qualifications. For many years past, their curriculum has been gradually improved, until it may fairly be pitted against that of any other medical institution. The curriculum and

the subsequent examination are, confessedly, superior to those of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen; as also of the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons—nor will I, for a moment, allow the examinations at the University of London, which are in many respects anything but practical, a superiority over the less assuming, but really more useful, institution at Blackfriars. I have said the boasted examinations at the University of London are less practical; I feel assured, that a careful examination of the question papers will confirm this opinion. I have myself perused several, and could regard them only as fitting for students fresh from the schools, and not by any means adapted to test the qualifications of gentlemen who had been some time in practice, and had, in consequence of their time being fully occupied in practice, been unable to keep up their knowledge of useless, or nearly useless, minutiae. A book student, without much really practical knowledge, might pass such an examination, and even obtain honours.

Perhaps both parties might be satisfied with a sort of compromise. The degree of M.B. might be granted to general practitioners possessing the double qualification, and who had attained a certain age, say forty, on payment of the fees, without an examination, or, at all events, on passing one that would really deserve the name of practical. It can hardly be expected, that gentlemen engaged in the arduous duties of their profession should quit them, to place themselves on the students' benches again, alongside of young men, who were not, perhaps, even born when they commenced practice; and yet this they must do, or be altogether deprived of the power of passing from *one extreme of the profession to the other*; and surely, in these days of liberalism, it will not be deemed right to keep men down in the lowest depths, and deprive them of all chance of rising. Be it remembered, that this question is one of time merely; that the general practitioners, whose claims I would advocate to, at all events, a higher position than some of your correspondents are willing to allow, had not the opportunity of belonging to such an university, and that the greater number of the present graduates, had not the institution in question been formed, must have presented themselves at the despised Apothecaries' Hall for examination, and the licence to practise. It cannot be just or right to deprive those who did not possess any chance of graduating when they commenced practice, or the power of obtaining a degree, now that their juniors, fresh from the schools, are enabled, by the liberality of the government, to obtain one, more especially as we find such a desire on their part to ride roughshod over all their medical brethren. To obviate any difficulty that might arise from the admission of general practitioners, without examination, who had been previously rejected, it might be provided that no one should be so admitted who was not in actual practice before the University was founded.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, Nov. 20, 1848.

A GENERAL PRACTITIONER.

GENERAL BOARD OF HEALTH.

[Abstract of the Second Notification of the Board, in the London Gazette of October 31st, 1848.]

THE first of the directions issued provides that all surveyors or trustees of highways shall have the public thoroughfares cleansed "once at least in every twenty-four hours."

Second. Public ways, alleys, courts, &c., not under the authority of the highway surveyors, are to be cleansed by the occupiers of every house or tenement adjoining, once in every twenty-four hours. "And with the use of such fluids or substances for preventing the escape of noxious effluvia as the medical (*sic*) of the guardians or others authorized shall think necessary."

The fourth and fifth regulations entrust to the guardians of the poor, or other parish officers, the execution of the foregoing, in case of neglect or default on the part of surveyors or trustees. The fifth provides—"That when and so often as any dwelling-house is in such a filthy and unwholesome condition as to be a nuisance to, or injurious to the health of, any person; or, "where upon any premises there is any foul and offensive drain, ditch, gutter, privy, cesspool, or ash-pit; or, where upon any such premises any animal is kept so as to be a nuisance to, or injurious to the health of, any person, the owner or occupier, and persons having the care or ordering of such dwelling-house or premises, shall cleanse, whitewash, or otherwise purify, as the case may require, such dwelling-house or building, with all reasonable speed."

Sixth and seventh: When, from poverty or otherwise, the occupier is unable to cleanse the premises, on his giving notice of

inability to the guardians of the poor, they are authorized and required to undertake the cleansing and purification of the premises. Also, "to visit, from time to time, or cause to be visited, the several dwellings and places where there may be ground for believing that necessity will arise for executing such directions."

The eighth provides for the interference of the parochial authorities, in the event of default or delay of the cleansing of premises by their owners or occupiers in case "*the medical officer*, or other person duly authorized as aforesaid, shall certify that the same requires immediate attention."

The ninth regulation requires that the guardians of the poor in Unions shall direct their clerk to make out a list of places where epidemic, endemic, and contagious diseases have of late been frequent.

Tenth and eleventh: the medical officers of the Union shall visit such places, and certify to the Board of Guardians all such places as are in a state dangerous to health.

Twelfth: each medical officer shall "forthwith, upon any case of cholera, or of typhus, or other epidemic," &c., report the same to the guardians; who, by regulation thirteen, are required to provide sufficient medical aid for the sick.

By regulation fourteen, suitable rooms or places are to be found by the guardians of the poor, "to which persons attacked by cholera, who cannot be properly treated in their own houses, shall be conveyed."

The fifteenth provides for the removal of persons in the vicinity of the patients attacked with epidemic disease, to places of refuge provided for the purpose, during the purification of their dwellings by the owners or the guardians of the poor; and by regulation sixteen the medical officer of the Union is empowered to order the removal of such persons.

Seventeenth and eighteenth: In case of death by cholera, or other epidemic disease, the last medical attendant, or person present at the death, is required to notify the fact of the death to the medical officer of the district, "who is charged with the execution of these orders for the prevention of the spread of such disease. And we do hereby authorize such medical officer to give such directions as may appear to him to be needful, in respect to the care, removal, and the time of interment, of the body, for preventing the communication or spread of disease."

By regulations nineteen and twenty the guardians are directed "to make arrangements for obtaining daily lists of persons attacked by cholera, or other epidemic disease;" also to appoint additional medical or other officers, if necessary, and to publish and circulate the provisions of the Act for the Prevention of Nuisances "by printed handbills or other means."

"Given under our hands, and under the seal of the General Board of Health, this 20th day of October, 1848.

"CARLISLE,
EDWIN CHADWICK,
T. SOUTHWOOD SMITH."

ELECTION OF SECRETARY TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

THE following circular relates to the opposition to the election of Professor Grove, as the new secretary of the Royal Society:—

The committee formed to promote the election of Professor Thomas Bell to the secretaryship of the Royal Society, about to be resigned by Dr. Roget, beg leave to submit to the fellows the following statement of facts and observations thereon.

At a meeting of the committee of zoology and animal physiology of the Royal Society, held July 4, 1848, the following resolution was moved by Professor Owen, seconded by Mr. Gray, and unanimously agreed to:—"That the committee, taking into consideration the large proportion of papers communicated to the Royal Society on subjects of anatomy, physiology, and other branches of natural history, and the loss which the Society is about to sustain by the retirement of a secretary eminent for his acquaintance with those sciences, beg respectfully to request the attention of the council to the advantage and desirableness of having one of the secretaries conversant with those branches of knowledge."

"Resolved,—That the secretary be instructed to communicate the above resolution to the council."

This resolution of the physiological committee having been duly communicated to the council, it was proposed in council by Sir Charles Lyell, and seconded by Mr. Gassiot,— "That Mr. Grove be recommended by the council to the Society for election as secretary at the next anniversary;" on

which an amendment was moved by Mr. Brown, and seconded by Dr. Roget,— "That Mr. Thomas Bell be recommended as secretary;" which amendment was negatived; the original motion was then put and carried.

The effect of this recommendation is to constitute the executive officers of the Society *entirely* of cultivators of physical science, leaving the natural sciences without an officer capable of abstracting an anatomical, physiological, or natural history paper, or of giving an opinion on its merits.

It cannot therefore be matter of surprise that such a deliberate and total neglect of the interests and feelings of the anatomists, physiologists, zoologists, and botanists, who form so large and highly important a portion of the Society, should have stimulated a considerable number of the fellows to endeavour to secure to the natural sciences *one* officer in the executive, capable of superintending the publication of their works, either in abstracts in the proceedings, or in detail in the transactions. The committee consider this the more necessary, as it will be seen that in the new council, as proposed by the present one, there is a most unequal apportionment of the members to the respective sciences which are supposed to be represented in that body;—there being eight members to represent the physical sciences, five geologists, and two chemists; while there is but one for comparative anatomy, one for physiology, and one for zoology, and not one representative of botany. Thus, of the whole council of twenty-one members, three only represent the natural sciences.

The committee therefore beg to place in your hands the enclosed *revised* balloting list, in which the only change is the reversal of the position of the names of Mr. Bell and Mr. Grove, in the hope that by your attendance and use of it on the day of election, instead of that proposed by the present council, you will aid them in endeavouring to restore to all classes of the fellows of the Society some share of that just representation and liberal treatment which should at all times characterize the executive of this and every other body of men.

Mr. Bell has stated, that "Should the majority think me deserving of the honour, and if I am elected, I shall consider it my duty to support the principle of a just recognition of the claims of a large and important part of the Society by accepting the trust."

The committee comprise forty-four fellows of the Royal Society.

* * We believe a committee of Professor Grove's friends has also been formed, and that the most strenuous exertions are being made to secure that gentleman's election.—ED. L.

ON A CASE OF SEVERE DYSPEPSIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A man, aged thirty-eight years, was affected, from his twentieth to his thirty-fifth year, with intense acidity of the stomach. Every remedy used only relieved temporarily; until, at length, electricity through the spine and stomach, and frictions of the spinal column with various embrocations, effected its entire removal. But after about a year's respite, and on recovering from a severe attack of influenza, symptoms no less distressing succeeded, and have continued during the last two years. I have seen many cases and varieties of dyspepsia, but I have never seen a case which exhibited a similar train of symptoms. I shall state these in the order of their severity. I may observe, that the first three symptoms are particularly troublesome, especially the almost constant hawking and spitting, and often exclude the party from society.

1st. A large and almost constant secretion of mucus from the fauces, root of the tongue, palate and larynx, mixed, and more or less diluted, with a considerable flow of saliva; the secretion is particularly abundant while taking food or drink of any kind, even a mouthful of water. Attempts to swallow it, when very tenacious, are always followed by nausea, sometimes retching, and occasionally vomiting, (urine normal in quantity and quality.) 2nd. Flatulence of stomach during digestion, which is performed with a painful feeling; there is no pain, however, at any time, on pressing the præcordia, or any part of the abdomen. The first symptom is always worse during the digestive process, and subsides a little as the stomach becomes empty. 3rd. Frequent involuntary twitches of the upper eyelids. 4th. Tongue large, pale, and tremulous, and covered with a thick, yellowish-white fur. 5th. A preternatural dryness of the nostrils, and a painful condition of their lining membrane. 6th. A torpid state of the liver and