

It has never been my practice, nor is it the proceeding of the accoucheurs of the present day,—all the most judicious and esteemed authorities might be quoted in confirmation,—to turn the child, and deliver by the feet in cranial presentations, where no complication exists; and especially where there is, or may be presumed to be, disproportionate size of the child. If we inquire into the reason for the practice pursued in the present day in these cases, it is this—that turning, even attempts to perform it, in the sad experience of those who have gone before us, was attended by so much danger and fatality to the mother by contusions and lacerations of her tissues, and was not even, by a fraction in such circumstances, where version was eventually accomplished, less certainly destructive to the child than cephalotomy, an operation which is, excepting under extreme distortion of the pelvis, a safe measure to the mother.

It is almost needless to add, after my allusion to the operation of turning under the above circumstances as long rejected from modern obstetrics, that if, perchance, after immense risk, or actual occurrence of lacerations, version had been accomplished, the head, engaging in the pelvis under still more adverse circumstances, with the basis of the cranium, the most dependant part, would in the end have required perforation behind the ear, and delivery by cephalotomy under increased risks.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,  
Russell-place, Fitzroy-square, 1849. JOHN HALL DAVIS, M.D.

#### WHAT HAVE BEEN THE REWARDS TO THE CHOLERA DOCTORS?

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—It would be very satisfactory to the profession, as well as to the public, to know what remuneration the parochial medical officers of the various London parishes and country unions received for their arduous and courageous labours during the prevalence of the cholera, a class of gentlemen to whom much is due, but I am afraid little is given.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
London, Nov. 8, 1849. A RECOVERED CHOLERA PATIENT.

\* \* The most striking example which we have heard of, is the vote of £100 to Dr. Ayre, for his services, from the Poor-law Board of Hull, an account of which will be found in our column of news, (p. 547.) The zeal and activity of Dr. Ayre have fully deserved this public meed of approbation. We hope that, in other places, similar rewards to those who have perilled their health and lives in the service of their suffering fellow-creatures will not be wanting.—[ED. L.]

#### THE REGULATIONS FOR THE FELLOWSHIP AT THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

IN publishing the following note, we can only express a very fervent hope that it will engage the early attention of the authorities who can supply the corrective for the removal of the grievance, of the existence of which our correspondent so justly complains.—[ED. L.]

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—The period is now drawing near, when the future junior candidates for the college fellowship will be required, besides their professional examination, to pass an ordeal in classics and mathematics. Now many of us who have been candidates for medical degrees at the London University have already undergone what is deemed a very strict examination on these subjects. For instance, the matriculation examination lasted four days; each day we had two papers, and three hours were allowed to answer the questions in each paper. The subjects were—Mathematics, two papers; Natural Philosophy, one paper; Greek Classics and History, one; Roman Classics and History, one; English History, one; the English Language, one; and one either on Chemistry, Botany, or Zoology.

Now this fact ought to be known to the council, and a by-law framed, to exempt those candidates who can produce certificates of having matriculated there from further examination on these subjects. Some of us, too, as apprentices to the college, have had our powers of construing Latin authors tested. But how to bring these suggestions home to the college authorities, except through the medium of your widely-circulated journal, I know not. Can you advise me? for this is not the only grievance as to the fellowship, to Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
A COUNTRY PRACTITIONER.

#### MEDICAL FEES AT ASSURANCE OFFICES.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—As you have always taken much interest in the subject of the remuneration of medical men by life assurance companies, and as your efforts (seconded by those of various members of the profession who have from time to time contributed to THE LANCET papers and correspondence on the question) have induced a considerable number of offices to give a fee in all cases in which they require an opinion, I doubt not that you will give insertion to the following correspondence, in order still further to aid the good cause, and to uphold the rights of the profession.

A few words will be sufficient to explain the following letters. On the 14th of August, I received an application (No. 1) from the Alliance Insurance Company, requesting me to furnish the directors with information relative to Mr. G. H. M—, and to state my opinion as to the eligibility of his life for insurance. In my reply (No. 2) I stated very briefly the motives which had determined me to decline, in every instance, answering the queries of those life offices which refused to offer a fee for the information they deem so essential. This led to a further correspondence of two letters on each side, between Mr. Engelbach (the actuary of the Alliance) and myself. I much regret that I am unable to send you copies of these letters, but as Mr. Engelbach's were probably written merely as private communications to myself, I scarcely felt justified in publishing them without first asking his permission; and on my applying to him on the subject, he stated that, "as your assumption that my letters may not have been written with the expectation of having them made public, is in strict accordance with the fact, I cannot have the satisfaction of meeting your wishes by consenting to the publication of the correspondence." However much we differed in opinion as to what ought to be the conduct of insurance offices towards medical referees, I have pleasure in bearing testimony to the spirit of urbanity manifested by Mr. Engelbach, in the letters which I received from him.

When I was applied to by the office, relative to the health of Mr. M—, I was not aware that it was his intention to effect a joint insurance on the lives of himself and Mrs. M—. I wrote to Mr. M—, (No. 3,) to explain my motives for refusing to give the Alliance an opinion relative to his health, and received in answer a note from him, (No. 4,) enclosing one he had received from the office, (No. 5,) by which I learnt, to my great satisfaction, that the surgeon who had attended Mrs. M—, and to whom she had referred the directors, had acted precisely in the same manner as myself, and, influenced doubtless by similar motives, had refused to certify to an office which declined to act in a spirit of justice towards the profession. The result was, that an insurance, which has since been effected with another office, which gives the usual fee to the medical advisers of the applicants, was lost by the Alliance.

Sooner or later, I feel quite confident that all insurance companies will remunerate medical men for the trouble to which they are put in giving the information which the offices require. It entirely remains with the profession to say how soon this shall be the case. If the members of the profession were united from this day forwards, in declining to give their opinion without receiving the fee, at the end of a month not an office would refuse it. That spirit of benevolence, which I am proud to say is so marked a feature in our profession, will, I trust, ever exist amongst us, and render us always willing to give freely the fruits of our best knowledge to the poor and needy and distressed; but that surely is no reason why rich and flourishing public companies should come and beg—and if they beg, why they should receive at our hands—gratuitous advice.

I have pleasure in enclosing you my card. Were it necessary I would sign my name to this communication, but as I have an objection to enter publicly, if it can be avoided, into anything which can possibly assume a controversial character, allow me to conclude, by subscribing myself,

Sir, your obedient servant,  
—, M.D. Cantab.

London, Sept. 1849.

(No. 1.)

Alliance Life & Fire Office, August, 1849.

SIR,—Your name having been referred to for the purpose of supplying the board of direction with necessary information with respect to Mr. G. H. M—, of —, whose life is proposed to be assured by the company, I shall feel much obliged by your early replies to the questions I have submitted, together with any further information you can offer,

which, in your opinion, can influence the directors in their decision.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

To Dr. —.

FRANCIS A. ENGELBACH, *Actuary.*

(No. 2.)

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, requesting me to forward you, for the guidance of the directors of the Alliance Life Office, any information I possess relative to the health and habits &c. of Mr. M—.

I beg to state, in reply, that I shall have pleasure in giving you the information wished for on the receipt of a guinea, which is the fee usually paid by those who desire the opinion of a physician.

I have, I believe, fairly and impartially paid attention to the several arguments adduced in favour of and against the payment of medical men by life assurance companies; and have endeavoured to come at an unbiassed conclusion as to whether the companies ought or ought not to pay for the opinion they wish to obtain.

The arguments have failed to show me that a medical man ought to be called upon for an opinion by a rich and flourishing company, without receiving a just recompence for his trouble. They have proved to me that the company is the party benefited by the opinion given, whether it be given in favour of or against the life intended to be assured; in the former case the company obtains what it desires—a good life; in the latter, it is protected from loss.

I have therefore come to the determination not to give an opinion relative to the health of my patients to any insurance company which does not offer the customary fee; and, at the same time, I am equally determined not to receive the fees from the patients themselves.

The directors of the Alliance Assurance Office cannot, I am sure, feel offended at my declining to furnish them with the information they desire, without their giving me the fee I named, as, in so doing, I am only acting on the principle which would compel me, under similar circumstances, to do the same to any other company.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

To Francis A. Engelbach, Esq. —

—, M.D. Cantab.

(No. 3.)

MY DEAR SIR,—The day before yesterday I received a paper from the Alliance Assurance Company, requesting me to give them information relative to your health. In reply, I sent the directors a letter, of which the following (No. 2) is a copy. I think it well that you should see it, lest, from any communication you might receive from the office you might misunderstand my motive. As the companies are very profitable concerns for the shareholders, a very general feeling exists in the profession that the offices ought to pay for the information they desire; and as many of them do so, a general determination has likewise sprung up not to answer the questions of those which refuse the fee. I fully participate in the feeling, and am equally clear that the person assured is *not* the one who ought to pay for information desired by the company for its own protection.

As you have selected the Alliance, I shall be very glad to learn from you that the directors have accepted your life; but unless they feel inclined to do justice to our profession, they must accept it without obtaining from me the opinion which they desire.—Believe me, dear Sir, very truly yours,

To Mr. G. H. M—.

(No. 4.)

DEAR SIR,—I am extremely obliged for the trouble you have taken respecting my assurance; and I think I have been quite as fortunate in the choice of the Westminster, which, I am happy to see, does your profession more justice.

I have inclosed the original letter I received from the Alliance, and hope you will be supported in your stand against them. I consider it nothing but just that they should pay the fee.

I expect to hear after Tuesday next, when I hope the assurance will be complete.—I remain, dear Sir, your most obliged servant,

To —, Esq., M.D.

G. H. M—.

(No. 5.)

Alliance Assurance Office, London, Aug. 1849.

SIR,—I am favoured with your letter of the 16th inst.; and now beg to inform you, that both Dr. — and Mr. H—, the medical referees of yourself and Mrs. M—, have refused to certify as to your health, without the payment, by the com-

pany, of a fee of one guinea in each case, which the practice of this office will not allow them to pay.

Under these circumstances the company must decline your proposals, unless the usual testimonials are furnished.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

To G. H. M—, Esq.

F. A. ENGELBACH, *Actuary.*

## 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 9th inst.:—

BODINGTON, GEORGE FOWLER, South Colfield, Warwickshire.

BOLTON, WALTER HOOK, Carrickmines, co. Dublin.

BRATT, WILLIAM, Stratford-on-Avon.

DUNN, GEORGE PEAT, Ledbury, Herefordshire.

HOWELL, JAMES, St. Clere, Carmarthenshire.

KAYE, RALPH HOLT, Ratcliffe Bridge, Lancashire.

NUTTALL, HENRY, Syston, Leicestershire.

ROBINSON, JOHN, Midhurst, Sussex.

WARBURTON, THOMAS JOHN, Betley, Staffordshire.

WILLIAMS, ALEXANDER, Army.

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

Thursday, Nov. 8th, 1849.

DYER, FREDERICK JOHN.

MONCKTON, DAVID HENRY, Brenchley, Kent.

POWELL, THOMAS BOLLAND, Knaresborough.

RAY, EDWARD RUTLEY, Millon, near Sittingbourne.

SCOTCHBURN, ALFRED, Driffeld, Yorkshire.

SMITH, ROBERT, Mumby-cum-Chapel, Lincolnshire.

DR. AYRE AND THE HULL BOARD OF GUARDIANS. (VOTE OF £100 TO DR. AYRE.)—A special court of the governor and guardians of the poor of Hull was held at the workhouse, on Friday last, Mr. BARRICK, the governor, in the chair.

The GOVERNOR first called attention to the remuneration of Dr. Ayre. That gentleman, throughout the whole of the late epidemic, was constant in his attendance upon his patients, let them be where they might, and never relaxed one item in his efforts. He was always at his post—morning, noon, and night. The finance committee thought they could not do less than pay to him the sum of £100. In addition to which, they thought a vote of thanks from the court ought to be presented to him.

Mr. TADMAN had great pleasure in moving that “the sum of £100, with the thanks of this court in writing, be presented to Joseph Ayre, M.D., as a memorial of his valuable services as the superintendent of the medical staff during the late cholera epidemic, and as a memento of its high appreciation of the ability displayed by him in the treatment of the disease.” The motion was seconded by Mr. FOUNTAIN, and carried unanimously.

Mr. E. F. COLLINS moved that “the thanks of this court be given to the Sanitary Committee for their constant endeavours during the whole epidemic disease.” Whatever his own opinions might have been as to their commencing their operations a little too late, there was no doubt, that from the time they did effectually enter upon them, nothing could be better carried out than the proceedings of the sanitary committee, or of this court. (Hear, hear.) He was sure it was one of the most gratifying things possible to himself to see how much they did when they depended more upon themselves and less upon other people, and determined to do that which, he was obliged to say in that court, the town-council shamefully neglected in the first instance; and where they had very little support from the magistrates. Certainly he thought that the fact of the justices not having supported the guardians better, by making a few examples of rich men, had been very injurious to the whole town, and threw a great deal of labour and anxiety upon the guardians which they might have been spared. He should have liked the resolution to have included, and he did include in moving it, an expression of thanks for the services of their solicitor or clerk, Mr. Bell, who had exerted himself almost night and day most indefatigably, in endeavouring to procure the abatement of nuisances. One of the last things the sanitary committee did—the erection of the house of refuge—was one of the most creditable. It showed to the inhabitants of the town that the guardians were actively engaged in looking after their interests. He concluded by