

ill informed, and the better taught are better informed is to state not an opinion but a fact—further, to say that patients treated for *medical* diseases by London surgeons or apothecaries are provided with professional advice of an inferior quality, and that such patients would, if treated by London licentiate physicians *ceteris paribus*, incur much less risk of maltreatment and enjoy a considerably better prospect of cure;—surely to make such an assertion is again to state not a mere opinion, but a demonstrable fact. If I should assert that the licentiates of the Royal College of Physicians are as good surgeons as the gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn-fields, or as skilful in druggery and compounding as the licentiates of the Hall, what would you say? Which would you call it, quizzing or fibbing?

If you will insert this in your next Number, I shall feel obliged and remain Sir your very obedient

CIVIS MEDICUS.

Jan. 8, 1834.

The communication of a "Bombay Assistant Surgeon," inserted in this week's LANCET (page 592), is, on many accounts, an exceedingly interesting document. It is to be hoped that the concluding portion of the letter will not fail to attract the attention of the Board of Directors of the Hon. East India Company.

NOTE FROM DR. JAMES JOHNSON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the last Number of the *Medical Gazette*, there is a heading in the table of contents, thus,—“Combination against the *Medical Gazette*,” and in the leading article this alleged fact is attempted to be substantiated as follows:—I am made to say, in the Westminster Medical Society, that I “had entered into an arrangement with THE LANCET,” &c. The editor goes on to say, that, “in the account which has been published of this, a good deal of *dress-ing* has been had recourse to, and the distinct avowal that overtures had been made and accepted, is glossed over.” Now, Sir, the whole of this is a fabrication. There is not one word of truth in it. I never made any statement of the kind, as one hundred witnesses, including your reporter, can testify. The allegation, in the above passage, is as false as the statement

itself. I have entered into no combination of the kind, or of any kind, with THE LANCET, or any other journal; nor have I either time or inclination to form coalitions, leagues, or cabals, against the *Medical Gazette*. I pity the man who could descend to such disreputable misrepresentations with the view of injuring a contemporary journalist. To his list of inconsistencies, collected from the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*, and occupying so many columns of the *Gazette*, the editor is perfectly welcome. I am only sorry that he did not make a selection from my journal more useful and instructive to his readers. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

JAMES JOHNSON.

January 7th, 1834.

P.S. As I never yet have done or said anything which I am ashamed or afraid to avow, so I have no hesitation in admitting that I have been mistaken as to the author of the paper attributed to Dr. Dill. The *Gazette* was published on the day the statement was made in the Society, and I did not see it till just before I went there. I did, at the moment, think it was Dr. Dill's, being certain that it was not my own, in consequence of having myself noticed Mr. Lawrence's paper in another part of my journal, and remarked on the similarity of our sentiments. As doubts arose in my mind a day or two afterwards, I omitted Dr. Dill's name in my own journal, as may be seen. It is well known that, about the period in question, I suffered a severe and protracted illness, during which I could not even correct the press. But the editor of the *Gazette* thinks he can detect my style in the said paper. To show the fallacy of this proof, I beg to draw his attention to a passage on which he lays great stress, and which he thinks I cannot evade, it is at page 536, beginning, “turn which way we will,” &c. This quotation, if written by me, would certainly show me to be very inconsistent with myself. However, on the very day after the charge was published, the author of the passage came and avowed himself; and, moreover, volunteered to communicate his name to the editor of the *Medical Gazette*—and he will do so. This shows how easily a style may be imitated. The author of the passage considered as mine, is well known to my contemporary, who will not doubt his assertion.

J. J.

* * * Our reporter fully confirms the statement of Dr. JOHNSON, that not one word was uttered by Dr. JOHNSON respecting his having “entered into any arrangement with THE LANCET.” When will the fabrications of the FABRICATOR cease?—

ED. L