

ensive measure that has yet been brought forward for the improvement of the medical profession, and that it is therefore of the greatest importance that it should meet with the sanction of the Legislature. Your petitioners have observed, that it is proposed to refer this Bill to a Select Committee of your honourable House, and they feel quite satisfied that there will be no difficulty in showing to any Committee that may be chosen how greatly the proposed Medical Registration Bill will tend to benefit the public, and promote the respectability of the medical profession, as well as to produce and consolidate that honourable feeling which ought to exist amongst the members of this acknowledgedly liberal and highly useful profession. Your petitioners are further convinced, that if it should please the Legislature to sanction it, the Medical Registration Bill will not prevent any necessary salutary reform being effected in the arrangements of the present licensing bodies or corporations; but, on the contrary, that it will be the first grand step towards securing a thorough and satisfactory plan of education and qualification for the medical profession at large. These being the humble, but sincere, sentiments of your petitioners regarding this Bill, we humbly beg that it will be the pleasure of your honourable House to pass it into a law during the present session of Parliament.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

DAVID BELL, M.D.; RICHARD VALENTINE,
M.R.C.S. Eng.; EDWARD HENESY, M.D.;
HENRY WALKER, M.D.

*To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland,
in Parliament assembled.*

The humble petition of the undersigned members of the National Institute of Medicine, Surgery and Midwifery, residing in Liverpool, sheweth,—

That your petitioners have viewed with much pleasure that a Bill is now introduced into your honourable House, intituled, "A Bill for the Registration of Qualified Medical Practitioners, and for Amending the Law relating to the Practice of Medicine in Great Britain and Ireland," as your petitioners feel satisfied that if passed into a law it would tend materially to benefit the medical profession and public generally. Your petitioners cannot but express their surprise and regret that the Council of the National Institute should oppose this Bill, as they consider such opposition to be a direct breach of faith towards their members, and they would therefore respectfully urge upon your honourable House not to regard the voice of the council as that of the members.

That your petitioners most sincerely and anxiously hope that the said Bill may be passed into a law in the present session of Parliament.

And your petitioners will ever pray.

JOSEPH B. BARROW, 18, Moira-street; WILLIAM LAWRENCE COCKS, Mount Pleasant; JAMES BRUCE, M.D., 58, Nelson-street; THOMAS INMAN, M.D., 16, Rodney-street; CHARLES BUTLER GREATHUX, 22, Moss-street; BENJAMIN BLOWER, 58, Stafford-street; HENRY HULME, 2, Moss-street; H. S. TAYLOR, Prescott-street.

Correspondence.

LETTER FROM MR. COYTE BISHOP.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

DEAR SIR,—As stated in my note to you, which appears in THE LANCET of the 22nd inst., I wrote the same day to George Ross, Esq., secretary, requesting the removal of certain names from the list of members of the National Institute of Medicine, &c., and promising other secessions in a few days, in consequence of the strange resolution of the Council of the Institute to oppose your Medical Bill, on grounds which I conceived to be utterly at variance with their former published statements.

This proceeding of mine brought me an explanation from Mr. Ross of the real (or intended) meaning of the resolution, and also an assurance of the unaltered opinions and intentions of the Council on the subject of medical reform.

My answer to Mr. Ross was to the effect, that I was quite satisfied with the "explanation," and was also in accord with the Council as to the objections raised by them against certain parts of the Medical Bill; but at the same time, I pointed to the plain English of the resolution, as admitting but of one construction, the one given by yourself and a numerous class in the profession.

As the explanation given was satisfactory to myself and friends, we agreed to remain members of the Institute for future operations; in case your Bill should unfortunately be defeated; but at the same time I have assured the Council of the Institute, that although we remain members of the association, we shall in no degree relax in our efforts to further the success of the Bill now before parliament, and that every member of the Institute with whom I am acquainted would have been better pleased had the Council applied the whole moral force of our confederacy to oppose, in committee of the House of Commons, such clauses of the Bill as appeared to be objectionable.

Your own honourable conduct, in offering to meet before the committee the various objectors to the measure, ought in itself to have disarmed all such blind and headlong opposition as is offered by the various corporate institutions of the metropolis.

As my very plain-spoken attacks on the Council of the Institute are published in THE LANCET of the 22nd inst., this explanation of my conduct will be necessary to set me right with them; for it appears that I was wrong in taking the plain and literal meaning of the published resolution as the basis of my opposition.—Yours very faithfully,

Durham, May, 1847.

WILLIAM EDWARD COYTE BISHOP.

THE AGE OF MANUALS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I think your correspondent "Justitia" has assumed a title, to which, in the instance of his communication to the last LANCET, he has but little claim. He has, in my opinion, done injustice to the high attainments of the recently appointed examiner in comparative anatomy and physiology to the London University. There are few who have done more to disseminate sound views in physiology, or who take a more comprehensive view of the whole subject, than the gentleman alluded to; or whose applications of comparative anatomy in elucidating the science of physiology are more apposite and philosophical—and this I presume to be the main object in introducing comparative anatomy into the examination.

As to the "Manual," it is by no means the pap-like composition for physiological infants to which such works have been compared, but an admirably written treatise, embracing all the leading facts and doctrines of the science of which it treats—a work well spoken of by all who have taken the trouble to read it. "Justitia" has probably never done so, but has been misled by the title—one not at all appropriate (according to the meaning we are accustomed to attach to it) to several publications which have of late been issued in the same form and by the same publisher. With the qualities I have mentioned, there are few who would be likely to give a more practical or useful examination in physiology—or one more nearly what it should be for a medical degree, than the gentleman appointed by the senate of the university. It is from no feeling of a personal nature I write this, but simply from being

Liverpool, May, 1847.

ANOR JUSTITIA.

PRUSSIC ACID OF THE PHARMACOPŒIA, AND OF SCHEELE'S STRENGTH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is with no wish to perpetuate painful recollections that I refer to a late melancholy event, which has already served as a text for many severe lectures both to prescribers and dispensers. But I am anxious, before the excitement occasioned by the accident has quite subsided, to call the attention of the profession to one point which has scarcely been noticed in connexion with this affair; although it has been repeatedly brought before them, unfortunately to little purpose, under less impressive circumstances. It has been frequently remarked, as a matter deserving severe censure, that the prescription which led to the fatal result, contained two ingredients for which there existed no authorized or generally recognised formulæ.* But there was a third ingredient, which comes, to a great extent, under the same category—namely, Scheele's prussic acid: which, nevertheless, is daily prescribed by our regular physicians and surgeons. As prussic acid has for eleven years found a place in our autho-

* It is true that formulæ for both these preparations are found in a few English works, selected from foreign pharmacopœias and hospital formularies; but they are not recognised by the practitioners of this country; and, in fact, none of them are those intended by the prescriber in the present case, and employed in his private dispensary.