

thing better, but until that time his condemnation should go for nothing. I do not think it fair to say, of a gentleman of Mr. Teevan's erudition, that he does not "appear to have consulted the chief English literature" of the subject upon which he has lectured so well. I believe Mr. Teevan to be thoroughly familiar with all the literature—good, bad, and indifferent—of the subjects which he treats, otherwise he never would have been appointed Lettsomian Lecturer by the learned body which has the power of conferring that honour.

The statement that the "operation is rarely if ever employed by more than one surgeon in Paris, and that many years ago, and now abandoned there," is not correct. It has been performed by other surgeons in Paris within a few years, and has never been abandoned, at least by Dr. Mercier. It has been very badly done by some surgeons, who, not understanding it, never should have undertaken it. They have abandoned it, and wisely too. All those who refuse to study the operation as it should be studied will either execute it badly or refuse to perform it. In bad hands it is worse than useless; in good hands it is eminently successful. Mr. Teevan has doubtless looked carefully into all the facts connected with prostatectomy, and deserves to be thanked for calling the attention of a learned Society to so important a subject, about which one-third of mankind after the age of fifty is so deeply concerned.

To the best of my knowledge and belief I declare that Dr. Mercier has performed his operation on upwards of four hundred patients. Hæmorrhage has been more frequent and abundant in incision than in excision, but has never been fatal. He considers it as merely a bugbear; consequently the Italian method is unnecessary. In a prostatectomy followed by prostatotomy (the excision and incision giving a depth of two centimetres) performed by me a week ago the patient lost half an ounce of blood, and the urine was tinged with blood for two days only. He sat up half of the day following the operation, and was up and dressed every day thereafter. He has not had a bad symptom. I may say the same of another patient sixty-seven years of age—operated upon two months ago—who sat up in bed in a few days and was up and dressed in a week. My oldest patient was seventy-six, was operated upon nearly two years ago, and is now in fair health and better of his urinary trouble than he had been for several years before.

The operation which I performed a week ago was done with an improved instrument, a modification which I made of Mercier's first excisor. I have within a few days ordered a new prostatectome, whose male blade will be much more easily opened to seize the valvule than Mercier's present excisor, and with which one centimetre of the depth of the valvule can at once be removed.

I have several new cases under preparation for prostatectomy, and see no reason why I should not continue to perform the operation. After my results have become generally known, this operation will, I think, make great progress in America. May it thrive in England, and may Mr. Browne be the first in Great Britain to say of it, in the language of Chaussier and Percy when they reported upon lithotripsy, that it is "equally glorious to French surgery, honourable to its author, and consoling to humanity."

I am, Sir, very respectfully yours,

JOHN W. S. GOULEY, M.D.,

Professor of diseases of the genito-urinary system in the
Medical Department of the University of the
City of New York, Surgeon to
Bellevue Hospital, &c.

New York, June 22nd, 1880.

TEACHING AND EXAMINATIONS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the course of a pleading in favour of the one-portal system, you have given publicity to statements regarding the teaching of, and examining in practice of, physic in the University which are quite erroneous, and I shall be obliged if you will insert this letter, and give the same publicity to the contradiction as you have accorded to the assertion.

I have never objected to any question put by an assessor in any examination, and the area of examination has never been restricted. I cannot imagine the possibility of my objecting to any question put by such examiners as those with whom I have been associated—Dr. Dyce Duckworth of St.

Bartholomew's Hospital, and Dr. Duffin of King's College—with both of whom I have enjoyed the most complete accord, and for whose depth of knowledge and precision in examining I have the highest admiration.

As to my course of lectures, I beg to refer you to the University Calendar, p. 82, from which I extract the following paragraph:—"It is intended that each course shall be, so far as possible, complete; but that while the general principles (included in Part 1) shall be fully discussed each session, the diseases of individual systems (included in Part 2) shall be taken up in different order year by year, and certain systems selected for more minute consideration."

It must be obvious to any one acquainted with what you justly call the "great theme" of practice of physic that no one can at the present day give a satisfactory course in a single winter session. I am personally of opinion that the Universities, and even the General Medical Council, should require two courses on such a subject. But considering that in the meantime only one course is required, I have uniformly striven to condense as much as possible, and each session include some account, at least, of the diseases of each physiological system. I venture to think that the course which you have selected for criticism would be found, on inquiry, one of the most complete delivered anywhere in a single session.—I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

July 12th, 1880.

T. GRAINGER STEWART.

* * We gladly insert Dr. Grainger Stewart's letter. Taken in connexion with Dr. Duckworth's letter and others which we publish, it makes it pretty clear that if the Edinburgh University student is not prepared for his examinations in the Practice of Medicine, it is not the fault of his teachers or their modes of teaching. If Dr. Stewart will read our remarks over again, he will see that while giving publicity to the "notion" of our correspondent as having possibly some basis in truth and raising one or two interesting questions, we expressed our belief that he was in actual error in his main suggestion, that an assessor in examinations was hindered in his choice of subjects by the professor. The case is very much as we surmised. Dr. Stewart's exposition of the Practice of Medicine in its completeness can only be got by a student attending two courses. Further proof that Dr. Stewart does not merely repeat himself is found in the large classes of students who attend two courses of his lectures, though only required to attend one. We agree with Dr. Stewart that it is scarcely possible in a single winter session to cover the wide field of practice of physic. But we think that the professor should not only overtake in each session the diseases "of each physiological system," but should emphasise the common and serious diseases of each chief organ, even if at the expense of some incompleteness of detail and system.—ED. L.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Under the heading of "Teaching and Examinations in the University of Edinburgh," you make a statement which I feel it incumbent upon me immediately to correct. You there say "an assessor in the University of Edinburgh, examining in the practice of physic, put a very proper and straightforward question, which was objected to by the examining professor on the ground that the subject had not been discussed by him in the course of lectures which the student had attended."

Being the assessor referred to, I beg emphatically to deny that any restriction was placed on the subject-matter at my disposal. It was from the first clearly understood that the range of my examinations was not to be in any way limited by the group of subjects which Professor Grainger Stewart had touched upon during the preceding winter. Far from that, Professor Stewart expressly desired me to examine upon any and every subject that might legitimately be included as "practice of physic." "The men are presumed to have prepared these subjects, whether they have heard them lectured upon or not." Professor Stewart never even gave me a list of the subjects that had formed part of his

previous winter course, and I am at this moment ignorant of what his curriculum comprised. As a matter of fact, I drew my questions from the whole range of the practice of physic, and was extremely gratified at the good "all round" standard of excellence they elicited.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ALFRED B. DUFFIN, M.D.,

Physician to King's College Hospital.

King's College, London, July 12th, 1880.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read with regret your remarks on "Teaching and Examinations in the University of Edinburgh," and as first senior medallist of the class of Practice of Physic, I have been asked to represent the class; and so I beg of you that you will do the Professor of the Practice of Physic the justice of publishing the following:—

The whole range of medicine cannot possibly be satisfactorily discussed in a hundred lectures of one hour each, but one set of systems is fully treated of in alternate sessions—the remaining systems not being neglected, but so dealt with as actually to give the student the most important points, and guide him to the rest. Consequently in no session is any system left untouched; and if one of the systems receiving a minor share of attention in any year happens to be the respiratory system, certainly such a disease as pneumonia would in any case be fully studied. In point of fact, I have attended the class of Professor Grainger Stewart during the past two sessions, and, after comparing the notes taken during these courses, I can state definitely and precisely that your fears of a necessarily imperfect education of the Edinburgh University medical student are entirely groundless. At the opening days of the session Professor Stewart distinctly told us that in the systematic course he would not be able to go over the whole subject with us, but said what he would do, and recommended the text-books necessary to get up the rest. Moreover, the Professor in his clinical lectures and bedside teachings constantly endeavours to illustrate more fully the imperfectly treated subjects; and since every student must attend the clinical lectures, and most students attend his clinics in the Infirmary at least one session, I am decidedly of opinion that if any student be imperfectly educated the shortcomings are not from the side of Professor Grainger Stewart.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Edinburgh, July 13th, 1880.

ANDERSON STUART.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue of the 10th inst. I find attention called to the conduct of the Examinations in Practice of Physic at Edinburgh.

Inasmuch as the alleged circumstances in your paragraph must refer either to Dr. Duffin, of King's College Hospital, or to myself, I am constrained, for my part, to offer the most unqualified denial to them.

After holding office for five years as a University Examiner, in association both with the late and the present Professors, I am free to state that I have no recollection of having been interfered with on any occasion in the course of my duties. I acted in the most strict and impartial spirit, all the candidates being strangers to me, and I certainly covered the whole field of subjects.

Not knowing the members of the Professor's class from those who had attended the lectures of other teachers, I could, of course, make no distinction in framing my questions; and, I may add, that I was equally ignorant of the particular subjects developed, or less fully treated of, by the Professor in his previous prelections.

So far as I am concerned, I am content to give a simple denial to your correspondent's assertions, leaving it to those who must, in this matter, have most knowledge—the numerous body of gentlemen whom I had the honour to examine, and to those who know me best to give me credit, or the reverse, for fairness and independence as an examiner.

Looking back upon my term of office, I may state that I could no more conceive of such interference, as alleged on the part of the Professor, than I could contemplate my own subserviency in paying any heed to it.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

DYCE DUCKWORTH.

Grafton-street, Piccadilly, July 12th, 1880.

HOSPITAL STATISTICS OF ALCOHOLIC STIMULATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Nearly twenty years ago I came to the conclusion that a careful analysis of the wine, spirit, and malt liquor roll of every hospital in the kingdom, with reference to the average daily quantities administered to each patient, would be a very important and valuable contribution to hospital statistics, if set forth in such a way as to show the limits of variation depending upon the practice of individuals in medical, surgical, fever wards, &c., over determinate periods, as, e.g., from month to month, from year to year, &c. In a volume entitled "Clinical Medicine," published in 1862, I submitted a statement of this kind bearing on my own practice for five years in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh; and in relation to fever, similar returns were afterwards published in even greater detail by myself and by Dr. Russell, indicating in daily averages the amount of alcoholic stimulants used by each patient in our respective fever wards in the treatment of typhus. These returns were not without an effect on medical opinion; but their usefulness would have been greatly increased had the method indicated in them been generally followed. And now that you are again directing attention to the subject, I would take the opportunity of urging that in every public hospital such returns should be regularly submitted, and an analysis of them published in the annual reports. The rough aggregates usually given as representing the practice of individual hospitals are of comparatively small value. If some one having authority would promulgate a blank schedule with the particulars required, it might be adopted, after due consideration, by every hospital in the kingdom without further delay.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

Glasgow, July 13th, 1880.

W. T. GAIRDNER.

"ARMY MEDICAL REPORT FOR 1878."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has just been called to a passage in the review of the Army Medical Report for 1878 in your issue of the 10th inst., in which you comment on the absence of any contribution from the medical division of this hospital. Will you permit me to say that I am not responsible for the omission. A very interesting, and, as it appeared to me, instructive report, was drawn up for the Blue Book at my request by Dr. Veale, Assistant Professor of Military Medicine in the Army Medical School, on the causes of fever under treatment in this hospital from Cyprus, Malta, and Gibraltar.

The interest of this report, to my mind, consisted in the fact that it established on a sure scientific basis the specific difference between the fevers of Cyprus and those of Malta and Gibraltar. This report was forwarded, through the usual official channel, to the authorities for publication. The executive medical officers of the medical division of this hospital are in no way responsible for its non-appearance.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

N. C. MACLEAN, M.D.,

Professor of Military Medicine, Army Medical School.

Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley,

July 13th, 1880.

THE VACCINATION ACTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a general practitioner, I think, with you, there is much to be said for the Legislature limiting the multiplicity of fines of parents for not having their children vaccinated. I object to make fools and fanatics into martyrs by fines and imprisonments, and to have the greatest discovery of medicine and the pure benevolence of the profession disparaged and misrepresented in the process. For my part, I should object to vaccinate a child brought to me by Dr. Brewer's policeman, and not by its parents. The limited fines will sufficiently indicate law and duty and civilisation. They will suffice to secure the vaccination of all children whose parents are not incurable fools, and, with all respect to Mr. Carlyle, these are not so very large a proportion of