

by placing before the public eye the exact circumstances under which it stood, and admitting the existence, though merely nominal, of a law on this subject, it having been the offspring of some ill-judged opinion; but when I state that sixty-five cases of the venereal disease—some in the primary, and others in the secondary, forms—have been admitted under my care during the last twelve months, without the fine referred to being exacted in a single instance, you will readily admit all the weight and concurrence in my feelings on this matter. Still, the fact of such a law being in existence was a grievous eye-sore, open to future acts of cruelty towards the sufferers, and of extreme injustice to the community, by refusing relief to distressed applicants, thereby disseminating abroad the evils of these diseases. On these grounds I resolved to rescind the same, and accordingly gave notice at the quarterly meeting in January to that intent, which I duly brought forward at the annual meeting of the governors on Wednesday last, and carried the motion without a dissentient voice, expunging from the code an objectionable and most arbitrary clause.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

Keppel-st. Russell-sq.,
April, 1847.

GEORGE L. COOPER, F.R.C.S.E.
Surgeon to the Bloomsbury Dispensary.

ROYAL SEA-BATHING INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—An article appeared in THE LANCET of April 24th, which is so partial in its character, and so calculated to mislead the governors of this Infirmary, that your informant must either have been most ignorant of his subject, or, what I should be sorry to believe, guilty of wilful misrepresentation.

The protest of the Medical Board, which he quotes, signed by so many names of the highest respectability, had no allusion whatever to the existing medical arrangements, but was intended to counteract another proposition, then before the directors, which he does not mention, leaving it to be inferred that it alludes to the present medical staff, which consists of two physicians, a consulting surgeon, a resident surgeon, and his assistant.

Though I cannot lay claim to the advantage of being a very old member of the College, the assertion that I am a young one, thus prominently expressed, may mislead. I have been in practice four years, previous to which I passed more than the usual time in preparation, in London and Oxford.

I have before publicly contradicted the unfounded assertion that I received any support from the treasurer.

Though I feel myself by no means to deserve the intended compliment of the consulting surgeon, I would remind your informant that there is little merit, or even honesty, in taking an isolated sentence (still less half of one) from a long speech, for the exercise of his satire, or to serve any other object he may have in view. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. G. FIELD,
Resident Surgeon to the Royal
Sea-Bathing Infirmary.

Westbrook, May, 1847.

REMARKS ON QUACKS AND QUACKERY.

(NO. III.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

QUACK.—“My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light.”

SIR,—I have again to thank you for your increasing efforts in endeavouring to put an extinguisher on Quacks and Quackery, whether existing in the ranks of legitimate practitioners, or in the herd of plunderers who are continually walking about like so many “roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour.” The extent to which the profession is robbed by Quacks is perfectly astonishing, and few medical men are at all aware of the extent of it. Take for example one compound, “Locock’s Pulmonic Wafers;” I am in a position to prove, that during the month of January, 1847, one house in London paid the Jew who vends the article, no less than 700l. Seven hundred pounds! and that for the consumption of one month only. You are aware that they are a compound of morphia and ipecacuanha; and I was told, only yesterday, by a highly respectable chemist, that he is in the habit of selling box after box to clergymen, (“orandum est, ab mens sana, in corpore sano:”) he mentioned two vicars and one curate who are in the constant habit of encouraging the Jew who continues to use the name of Dr. Locock, and that, too, after the Doctor has continually stated, the compound was made (as we of the profession of course know very well; not so the public,) without his knowledge, and his name used without his consent. A few weeks ago, a mother brought into

my room her son, in the last stage of phthisis pulmonalis. The poor fellow appeared in a dreamy state, the pupils were contracted, and from his general appearance, the partial stupor, &c., it was at once evident to me that he was labouring under the effects of some narcotic. I asked her what her son had taken? The reply was, “Almost everything, Sir, and I reckon you can do him no good; for although we are bad off for something to eat at times, I have got him four boxes of these Wafers that are put out by the Queen’s Head Doctor,” and she produced from her pocket an empty box of “Dr. Locock’s Pulmonic Wafers.” I told her that she had been cheated by a Quack,—that Dr. Locock knew nothing about the wafers; and telling the poor lad to take no more of the filthy poison, advised her to put her son upon a milk diet, and to let me see him again in a week. He never came; and I have no doubt, from the state he was in when I saw him, that he is dead. Now, I ask, Sir, is it not abominable that the present state of the law should be such as to permit the daily use of Dr. Locock’s name in this most improper manner?—nay, more, is it not a disgrace to our country, to our Queen and her government—a vile blot on our civilization, to permit this quack and his hundred brothers to sell their poisonous compounds to the public, ornamented and protected by a government stamp? There must be something very imperfect in the condition of that country which derives a portion of its revenue from the duty paid by the compounders of quack poisons, which have hurried, and are hurrying, so many of our friends and neighbours to the grave.

I turn from this quack, the poor, deluded, plundered mother, and her dying son, to a consideration of the state of quackery in the county in which I reside—Nottinghamshire; and I much question if a single paper, printed and published in it, is sufficiently decent to be taken up by any lady. For “Manhood; the Causes of its Premature Decay”—“Urino-Genital Diseases”—“On Marriage, and the Disabilities which Prevent its Consummation,” would meet her eye at almost every part of the paper; and I ask, as the father of a family, if such publications are fit or proper to meet the eye of a wife or a daughter? If a man places in his shop-window an indecent print, the law takes cognizance of his offence; why not so alter its provisions as to draw within its grasp the publishers of all papers containing indecent advertisements? Three months on the treadmill would be a punishment most richly merited; and if any honest man will look at the question fairly, he will at once say, no punishment is too severe for the publisher, editor, or proprietor of a newspaper, who will permit such advertisements as the following, all appearing in one paper, published yesterday in Nottingham, and now before me:—Franks on “Urino-Genital Diseases,” recommended by “Bell’s Life” “to those who, suffering under deserved penalties, wish to pay them off as speedily as possible.” Then we have Curtis and Co. (the filthy beasts, I cannot call them men) “On Solitary and Sedentary Habits;” and then come Brodie and Co. on “Solitary Indulgences, Neglected Gonorrhœa, Secondary Symptoms; followed by Observations on Marriage, with Proper Directions for the Removal of all Disqualifications.” Such are the advertisements which are permitted to be paraded before the public in a family newspaper. My remarks on this part of the quackery question must be reserved for another occasion. I fear too much of your valuable space has been already taken up; yet with a view of showing the manner in which the quack-firms conduct their business, I must now place before your readers the following circular. It is signed R. and L. Perry and Co., and addressed,—“Mr. F. Appleby, Chymist, Church Gate, East Retford. If left, to be opened by his successor.”

“19, Berners-street, Oxford-street, London, 1847.”

SIR,—Being desirous of establishing an Agency in your town, for the sale of our MEDICINES and SILENT FRIEND, we shall have no objection, if it meet your approval, to insert your name in all the newspapers in your town, and other influential papers around your district.

We annex a scale of nett cash prices of our Medicines and Book, which may be had in any quantity, as required, direct from our Establishment, or from Messrs. Barclay and Sons, Farringdon-street; W. Sutton and Co., 10, Bow Churchyard; W. Edwards, 67, St. Paul’s Churchyard; Butler and Harding, 4, Cheapside; R. Johnston, 68, Cornhill; Hannay and Dietrichsen, 63, Oxford-street; J. Sanger, 150, Oxford-street.

We wish it to be distinctly understood, that our business is only conducted on CASH TERMS, and as the SILENT FRIEND is part and parcel of our MEDICINES, it will of course by no means answer to separate them—should you, however, prefer your supplies through the medium of the London Wholesale