

the virulent attacks of such men as Mr. Carter and his friends. I can assure your readers that I shall continue to work in the interests of progress in the educational and other matters connected with our great profession.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,  
Hatfield, Herts, Dec. 20th, 1896. LOVELL DRAGE.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—I would desire also to heartily thank the 1862 gentlemen who recorded their votes for me at the late election of the General Medical Council, and particularly to my over 900 pledged supporters, several of whom are eminent and well known in the profession; and many, too, have written me several letters evincing their earnestness in medical reform and their interest in, and good wishes for, my successful candidature. Allow me also to thank the Editors of THE LANCET for their publishing reports of my meetings, of my address, and the inserting of several letters in the columns of THE LANCET, as well as for their courtesy during my candidature. The election proved two things—its overcrowded ranks, the poverty of the greater numbers, and its apathy; but the apathy was, with few exceptions, that of the prosperous section, who appear thus indifferent to their poorer brethren.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Dec. 21st, 1896. FREDERICK ALDERSON, M.D.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—Mr. Brudenell Carter thinks direct representation is a "farce"—and few will deny that as the General Medical Council is at present constituted he describes it correctly. What possible chance can five independent members have of maintaining the opinions of the profession against twenty representatives of the "schools"? That we should continue to allow ourselves to be so "governed by our schoolmasters" is truly a "farce"—degrading to our manhood and to our intelligence. Mr. Carter naturally explains the smallness of the poll in a manner which fits in with his own views. Much more probably is it due to (1) disgust at the ineptitude hitherto displayed by the ruling majority, and (2) to a recognition of the unfair conditions which our direct representatives have been called on to face. You, Sirs, mention "that each of the direct representatives has been appointed by a larger number of votes of the medical profession than any of the other members of the Council." This is, indeed, a surprising statement!

Mr. Carter thinks little of the 6646, 5369, and 4910 votes given respectively for our "directs"—Dr. Rentoul, Mr. Brown, and Dr. Glover. He "thinks that none of our new 'representatives' (*sic*) can claim the *smallest* right to speak in the name of the profession!"

The obvious question which arises is, What is the number of the voters who gave Mr. Carter a seat on the Council? It must exceed the votes given for our "directs," otherwise he would have recalled, before writing, the adage concerning those who live in glass houses.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Uppermill, Saddleworth, Dec. 21st, 1896. COLIN CAMPBELL.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—No doubt you will afford me the opportunity to return my sincere thanks in the columns of THE LANCET to the 2760 electors who recorded their votes for me as a candidate for the General Medical Council. With the limited time at my disposal and under the difficult conditions of the contest a direct appeal to more than about 5000 or 6000 of the voters, many of whom had already promised their support to other candidates, was not practicable, and I have every reason to be gratified with the cordial response which I received. Moreover, it is satisfactory to know that the views and measures which I advocated commended themselves to a much larger number of electors than those who were able to vote for me, and of this there is a striking proof in the return at the head of the poll of the candidate whose opinions were most in accordance with my own.

The apathy and indifference to their electoral privileges of about 40 per cent. of the members of the profession are to be regretted, but they are not confined to the election to the General Medical Council. When appeals are made to the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons

of England between 600 and 700 only respond out of nearly 1100 who could do so if they would; and at the present time there is a large number of Fellows who have not returned an answer to the circular sent out by the Council in regard to the important subject of the representation of the Members of the College on the Council. Perhaps Mr. Brudenell Carter would regard this as a proof that we ought to return to the old system of an irresponsible and self-elected collegiate council instead of endeavouring to enlist the interest of a still wider constituency in the affairs and prosperity of the College. At all events, it is premature to regard direct representation of the profession on the General Medical Council to be a failure because Dr. Rentoul and Mr. George Brown have been returned to the Council and stand first and second on the poll. Both are reformers of long standing and men of tried ability and experience, and I firmly believe that they will prove that the choice of the electorate was justified and very likely achieve results which will be a surprise to those who underrate their capacity. It rests with the electorate to afford them adequate support and their success would be assured.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,  
Wimpole-street, W., Dec. 21st, 1896. WALTER RIVINGTON.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—There is another very obvious explanation of the fact that some 9000 practitioners failed to vote at the recent election which Mr. Carter has apparently been unable to perceive. This is that the abstentions were due to a very prevalent feeling that the Council has done nothing in the past and cannot, while it takes its present limited view of its functions, do anything in the future for the benefit of the general practitioner. It is this feeling which, it is everywhere understood, caused the resignation of Mr. Wheelhouse and Sir Walter Foster. They saw in the words of Mr. Carter that "direct representation is a farce." And why is it a farce? Because the practitioners of this country are represented by such an infinitesimal minority on that body, which, as you truly say, ought to be "the central governing body of the profession," as to be unable in the slightest degree to influence its decisions. In 1886 the electors did not realise this and voted in good numbers; in 1891 they began to perceive it and the voting fell off; in 1896 many more of them finding that the existence of the Council under present conditions is of no earthly use to them declined to vote at all. If Mr. Carter thinks this state of affairs either creditable or satisfactory I beg to differ from him, and I venture to remind him that there are still 12,000 of his fellow practitioners who differ from him also.

I remain, Sirs, faithfully yours,  
Putney, Dec. 21st, 1896. W. G. DICKINSON.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—Will you give me space to intimate my heartiest thanks to my supporters in the late election and to assure my constituents of my constant readiness to attend to their individual and collective interests in the General Medical Council?

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,  
Dec. 17th, 1896. WILLIAM BRUCE.

## HEAVY FINE OF AN UNQUALIFIED PRACTITIONER: PROSECUTION OF B. W. DAVIES.

*To the Editors of THE LANCET.*

SIRS,—From your reference to the case of B. W. Davies in your issue of the 12th inst. your readers may be led to infer that the prosecution of this unqualified person was instituted by the collier Thomas Hulke. As a matter of fact, the prosecution was instituted by our clients, the Medical Defence Union, Limited, by whom the former prosecution of this man was also instituted, and Mr. Paine, the solicitor prosecuting, acted in each instance upon our instructions and as our agent.

We are, Sirs, yours obediently,  
HEMPSONS,  
Solicitors for the Medical Defence Union, Limited.  
Dec. 14th, 1896.