

DRS. HUTCHINSON AND DAVIDSON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Other engagements have prevented my earlier notice of the truly characteristic letter of R. Hutchinson, M.D., St. Andrews, one of the Physicians to the Nottingham General Hospital, published in THE LANCET of the 17th ult.

I might, indeed, have safely left it to all who are acquainted with the parties, to judge which was the more likely to give utterance to an untruth; especially as I was of opinion that none besides would take any interest in such a controversy.

I yield, however, to the advice of several of my professional brethren, in requesting the insertion, in your widely-circulated journal, of the following statement of facts connected with the case of the diabetic patient, Moss, which appeared in THE LANCET of December the 27th, communicated by Dr. Hutchinson.

This patient was admitted into the hospital by Dr. Hutchinson, October 22nd, 1832, and remained in the hospital, under his care, till March 5th, 1833, and as an out-patient till April 18th.

As Dr. Hutchinson has not thought fit to transmit you the records of his own note-book relative to the case "during the six months the poor man was under his management," I have considered it due to him and to the profession to avail myself of his "'sanction' to make what use I please of his notes," granted me in his letter of the 13th ult. (LANCET, Jan. 17th), and have been at the trouble of transcribing them; I shall in a few days send you an accurate copy, for the edification of your numerous readers, when, I believe, it will be evident that the patient was the subject of diabetes for a long period, if not from the time of his admission, without my learned colleague being aware of the fact, and that when he did stumble upon the real nature of the case, he speedily set about ridding himself of it by making the poor man an out-patient, although his home was seven miles distant from Nottingham.

I had no knowledge whatever of this case prior to his presenting himself to me for admission as an out-patient of the hospital, Dec. 11, 1833, when, finding him labouring under the well-known symptoms of diabetes mellitus, the distance of his residence, and the state of his circumstances, induced me strongly to recommend his again becoming an in-patient.

In the treatment of the case, I had occasion to order him to be bled, when the

appearance of the blood led me to direct that it might be preserved; but I was astonished at my next visit to learn that *Dr. Hutchinson had carried it away*, without any intimation to me, or permission given!

I quickly discovered that it had been conveyed to my talented and esteemed friend Mr. Grisenthwaite (then of Nottingham, now of Cambridge House, Hackney Road), who, finding it had been taken from a diabetic patient of mine, very politely communicated with me on the subject, stating that he would furnish me with an account of his analysis of the milky serum, which, together with the medical history of the case, I might transmit for publication.

Mr. Grisenthwaite's removal from Nottingham to London, and his previous preparatory engagements, interrupted these proceedings, and thus the matter stood, when I read with surprise in THE LANCET of Dec. 27th the account of the case as communicated by Dr. Hutchinson, introduced by a rhapsody about solidism, fluidism, &c., which I believe none but the learned Doctor can comprehend.

In this communication, *without one single reference to the history of this poor man's malady during the long period he was under his own care* ("six months!"), *he publishes a manifestly incorrect copy of notes from my case-book, surreptitiously obtained.*

This conduct of Dr. Hutchinson I laid before the committee of the institution, having previously learnt that Mr. Creeke, the junior apprentice, had been directed by Dr. H. to transcribe my notes, without my leave or knowledge.

Dr. Hutchinson attempted to defend himself by assuring the committee, "upon his honour as a gentleman," that he had desired Mr. Creeke to ask my permission to take the copy required, of which Mr. Creeke denied the *slightest recollection*, but declared that he acted *under Dr. Hutchinson's express directions*, in transcribing my notes.

The following is a copy of a note which I have received from Mr. Creeke on the subject:—"Dear Sir,—In answer to your request, I have only to say, that as far as my recollection of the circumstances goes, Dr. Hutchinson never directly or indirectly expressed a wish that I should ask your permission previous to copying the case of Moss; and certainly he did not do so. I only saw him once on the subject (as we were walking through the wards), and I copied the case out the same day he directed me, which was taken to his house. Your, &c.

JOHN C. CREEKE.

"General Hospital, Feb. 7, 1835."

Further, Dr. Hutchinson having before the Committee *publicly* accused Mr. Creeke of not conveying his request to me, sought the first opportunity of *privately* assuring Mr. Creeke that no blame attached to him, which manifestly would not be true if Dr. Hutchinson had in reality directed him to request my concurrence in the transcription.

My conception of this conduct of Dr. Hutchinson, is that *it is highly unprofessional, and that he has made an unjustifiable and "improper use of my case-book."*

The correctness of this inference, so coarsely and intemperately impugned by Dr. Hutchinson, in his letter of Jan. 13th, I now confidently leave for the profession to decide, who can have no difficulty in discovering the Doctor's motives, and appreciating the measures he has made use of or the principles that guide him. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

JOHN MITCHELL DAVIDSON, M.D.
Senior Physician to the General Hospital
near Nottingham.

Nottingham, Feb. 11th, 1835.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.

THE "PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If a student at the hospitals or medical schools finds himself aggrieved, he naturally looks for assistance, not to his teachers, for they are generally the promoters of his grievance, but to THE LANCET, or rather to its Editor. I therefore apply to you for information respecting a Doctor Pardoe at this hospital, and to know what is the situation he holds at St. Bartholomew's. He styles himself "Professor of Pathology or Morbid Anatomy," but I have not yet heard of any one having been enlightened by his labours, nor any mention of him in the institution, except as the object of almost universal complaint, inasmuch as he takes upon himself to institute post-mortem examinations of the bodies of all the unfortunate people who die in this hospital; and as the bodies of a great part of the whole of the deceased patients who are unclaimed come into the dissecting-room (it is but seldom that we get another subject, as, from some cause or other, they are very scarce), there is a general want of abdomens, necks, and brains. Of four subjects which come into the room, the extremities only of three are fit for dissection, the post mortems held on them by the accomplished "Pro-

fessor" having totally destroyed the other parts, and the brains, when not examined, being run off with by the dressers. Now, as the anatomical examinations at the Hall and College are generally on one or other of the absent portions, and as we have paid twenty guineas each to be allowed to teach ourselves, it does seem very hard that the researches of this morbid anatomist should interfere so effectually with our chance of getting anatomical knowledge. Many of the students are now standing still with respect to anatomy. Something should be done to abate the nuisance of valueless post-mortems, while there are so few subjects to be had from other quarters. By whom is Doctor Pardoe employed, or does he puddle amongst the bodies for his own amusement? If Doctor Pardoe wishes to dissect, or to learn morbid anatomy, let him enter and study under those whose duty it is, as paid officers of the hospital, to teach us anatomy and pathology, and obtain his subject also *in his turn*, and not hinder others from dissecting important parts by making such a mess with the contents of the cavities. If you have sufficient room in your periodical, perhaps you will be so kind as to insert this letter, in order that the grievance may meet the eyes of those who superintend the anatomical department of the school. I would add my name, or try to make effectual complaint in the hospital, but I am well aware that I should be marked out for vengeance, for these gentlemen are like the Venetian Council of Ten,—they do not stop until they have damaged the party in some way or other who is so unwise as to offend them; so I shall call myself your obedient servant,

VENA PORTÆ.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital,
February 11, 1835.

GUY'S HOSPITAL.

THE following reports have been sent to us from this hospital for publication, and are inserted as they were received:—

LITHOTOMY.—Jan. 27, 1835. Jas. Smith a healthy-looking boy, ætat. six years, had laboured under symptoms of calculus vesicæ, for some months previous to his admission, and now came to the hospital to be relieved by an operation. He was brought into the theatre at one p.m. this day, when the operation was performed by Mr. B. COOPER, in a short space of time, smoothly and distinctly, all the steps of the operation being very well performed.