

terms in which it is expressly and unequivocally stated that our commission shall become due when any particulars have been obtained here by a purchaser, however and by whomsoever the negotiation may have been conducted. We found, shortly afterwards, that he was employing other agents, and at once suggested the withdrawal of his business from us, warning him that, otherwise, he might have to pay two, if not more, commissions. He declined this, and we explained to him that we could not take the initiative because it would have invalidated our claim to remuneration had he subsequently closed with any gentleman previously introduced by us. We continued our exertions, and eventually met with Dr. Williams, to whom we described the practice in detail; if he had already heard of it, we were in entire ignorance of the circumstance. A week afterwards, Dr. Ward withdrew it from our books, being "determined to remain in Kensington for at least six months longer." Within two or three days, as we learned by accident, he disposed of it to Dr. Williams, and refused to pay our "extraordinary demand," amounting, by the way, to £25 5s. 6d.

So that after, in a manner, forcing us to act for him against our wish (as was admitted by him on cross-examination), Dr. Ward declined to be bound by the terms to which he had agreed, and escaped payment, not from the "weakness" of our case, but merely through an unprecedented and unforeseen decision of Mr. Adolphus in these words: that by "consenting to a withdrawal, our whole contract with the defendant had been rescinded." This was the sole ground of his judgment against us.

The actual and only defence set up was that we had given no particulars. Dr. Ward intimates to you that the reverse, as reported in your journal, was nothing beyond a "statement of counsel," and that Dr. Williams would have proved his plea. The facts being that Mr. Lara swore to having furnished full particulars, and that had Dr. Williams, through want of memory, contradicted him, an agent of Dr. Ward, with whom we were personally unacquainted, could have been called to whom Dr. Williams had acknowledged everything to which Mr. Lara deposed.

If Dr. Williams is still oblivious, the gentleman to whom we refer will, we have no doubt, write you two lines confirming our assertion far more strongly than we have put it.

We think Dr. Ward will scarcely descend to deny a single word of the above. We had nothing to do with his contracts with other agents; and if he chose to retain the services of all in London—as we believe, without exception, he did—we were not debarred from recovering according to our agreement with him, simply because he considered himself liable to pay one or other.

We are as willing as himself to leave the matter, not only to the "judgment of the public and the profession," but of every lawyer in England, save him who tried the question, and against whose verdict there is, unfortunately, no appeal, as too many medical gentlemen have already discovered to their cost.

We remain, Sir, your obedient and obliged servants,
Temple, May 21st, 1859. LARA AND WALTERS.

THE EFFECT OF CHLOROFORM ON THE RESULTS OF THE SEVERER OPERATIONS.

(LETTER FROM DR. J. ARNOTT.)
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As my letter on the "Statistics of Amputations" has, contrary to my expectation, been replied to in your last number, I must beg permission to state the facts on which I founded the assertion, that in the work upon this subject, lately reviewed in THE LANCET, the rules of statistical evidence had not been adhered to. I regret that I am under the necessity of doing so.

One of these rules is, that the facts or data compared together must be sufficiently numerous. Granting that the data quoted from the records of the London Medical Society of Observation are correct, their number (184) is too small for comparison, particularly when they lead to an inference so different from that proceeding from other similar data at least ten times as numerous. My estimate of the rate of mortality from the severer amputations is not only founded on the published and unquestionable data of Messrs. Potter, South, and other London surgeons, but is corroborated by Dr. Simpson's return of 680 amputations before the introduction of chloroform, and other collections, including those of Mr. B. Phillips. All these show a much smaller mortality than is said to be

shown by the cases reported by the Society of Observation, but which the following remarks will prove were probably not intended to bear on the question of the rate of mortality. The whole number of these cases, collected, we are told, in all the London hospitals during a period of six years, amount to little more than the average number of operations performed in the London hospitals during one year, and were probably only a selection of those having most interest. The respectable reporters of these cases will be not a little surprised to learn that they and their colleagues were losing 50 and 44 per cent. of those on whom they performed the least dangerous (or pathological) thigh and arm amputations. Such a slaughter probably did not occur in the days when red-hot knives and caustics were used in this operation.

Another rule in statistics is, that the cases compared shall be similar. I am told that my charge of dissimilarity in the data adduced is unfounded. If I erred, it was by mistaking imaginary for dissimilar data. I could not for a moment suppose that pathological amputations of the thigh and upper extremity in any British hospitals could produce a mortality of 50 and 44 per cent., and concluded that the cases had occurred in military practice under very unfavourable circumstances, or in some crowded foreign hospital. On reading the pamphlet with more care, I perceive that, as has just been related, they are said to have occurred in the London hospitals about twenty years ago. Upon what sort of evidence does this allegation rest? We find in a table at page 12 (if we take the trouble of making the calculation for ourselves) that the rate of mortality after amputations for disease of the thigh, leg, and arm, during six years in London and before the introduction of chloroform, was, respectively, 29, 44, and 23 per cent.; but in page 17 of the same work, when an "overwhelming" evidence in favour of chloroform is to be adduced, we meet with a wonderful augmentation of even these high figures: we are told that, in the pre-chloroform period, the same data show that pathological amputations of the thigh were fatal in 50 per cent., those of the leg in 29, and those of the arm in 44 per cent. of the cases. To make the contrast between the pre-chloroform and post-chloroform periods more striking, we are, moreover, informed that, while the tables of the London Medical Society of Observation show that in arm amputations for disease the mortality amounted in the former period to 44·8 per cent., in the tables showing the mortality in the London hospitals from the same operation during eighteen months of the latter period "no death is recorded." On examining these latter tables, I find a record of six deaths during that period: two from amputation for disease of the elbow and carpus, and four from amputation for phlegmonous erysipelas.

I regret that these and other statements of a similar character should be contained in a "Prize Essay," apparently with the sanction of the authorities of the King's College Hospital School. On this account alone have I noticed them. It is natural, as I have said, that those who have employed chloroform in every operation should wish to be justified in continuing to do so; but advocacy of so singular a description is not calculated to delay that restriction in the use of this agent which our experience of its immediate and ulterior evil effects imperatively demands.—I am, Sir, yours &c.,

London, May, 1859.

JAMES ARNOTT, M.D.

MONUMENT TO THE LATE DR. SNOW.

[NOTE FROM DR. B. W. RICHARDSON.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A few professional friends have been kind enough to join with me in undertaking to place in the Brompton Cemetery a plain, but durable, monument over the grave of the late Dr. Snow, as a last and fitting memorial of the esteem in which he was held by those of his professional brethren who enjoyed the pleasure of his friendship.

Having ascertained that such mark of remembrance would be congenial to the feelings of Dr. Snow's relatives, I take the opportunity of making the project widely known through your columns, feeling sure that a great many members of the medical body will be glad to co-operate in paying this simple tribute to the memory of our late estimable and distinguished brother in science.

A committee will be organized shortly to carry out this object to completion; meantime, subscriptions for the memorial may be forwarded to Dr. Hawksley, 26, George-street, Hanover-square, W., or to myself.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
12, Hinde-street, May, 1859,

B. W. RICHARDSON, M.D.