

duty of my office to render gratuitous medical assistance to the poor who reside beyond my district?

Having understood that the Board of Guardians of the Weymouth Union have requested that I "may be suspended," I shall feel greatly obliged by your favouring me with a copy of their letter, as I am anxious to know what could induce a public body of men privately to assail my character, without saying one word to me of the charge preferred against me. I need scarcely tell your hon. Board that it is not pleasant to have suspension hanging over one's head, like the sword of Damocles, not knowing when it may fall. I court the fullest investigation, and if I deserve censure, I shall bow with meek submission to the stroke.

I have the honour to be, my Lords and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

The Poor-law Board, Whitehall.

RICHARD GRIFFIN.

## THE ADULTERATION OF MILK.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In reference to a remark in THE LANCET of Jan. 24th, p. 98, upon the offence of watering milk in London and elsewhere, allow me to mention a recent conviction of two Paris milkmen, who were punished with three months' imprisonment, and with their names being published in a certain number of newspapers as having been guilty of this scandalous adulteration, so common in London, and there considered, it may be supposed, incapable of correction.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Nice, January, 1857.

HARVEY GEM.

## CURE OF CANCER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I find in THE LANCET of Saturday last, a paragraph stating that a ward had been placed at my disposal in the Cancer Hospital. I beg to say such is not the case. It should have been *Middlesex*, instead of Cancer.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Warwick-square, February 4th, 1857.

J. WELDON FELL.

\* \* The paragraph was extracted from a Sunday newspaper. In another part of THE LANCET it was also announced that Dr. Fell had had several patients placed under his care at the Middlesex Hospital.—SUB-ED. L.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your journal of last week there appears a paragraph headed "Cure of Cancer," to the effect that the authorities of the Cancer Hospital had placed a ward at the disposal of a stranger. As this paragraph is calculated to mislead the public, and to produce a false impression on the minds of the medical profession in London and elsewhere, I have to request that you will, as soon as may be, insert an unqualified contradiction to the statements therein made. The authorities of the Cancer Hospital, London and Brompton, being fully satisfied with the competency of the surgical staff now attached to the hospital, feel wholly at a loss to understand how such a paragraph, devoid of all foundation in truth, should have found its way into the pages of THE LANCET.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

Board Room, 167, Piccadilly,  
Feb. 3rd, 1857.

DAVID MOCATTA,  
Chairman of the Board.

## ODY VERSUS THE GUARDIANS OF THE HARBOROUGH POOR-LAW UNION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In this case, reported in your last week's impression, the plaintiff was nonsuited because he "had neglected to obtain, before performing the operation, the certificate of a qualified surgeon, 'that the operation was necessary and proper to be then done,' as required by Art. 178 of the new Poor Law."

Despite the ruling of the Judge, I think it is open to an opinion whether "this objection" was legally valid, for two reasons:—

1st. In Glen's Commentary on the General Consolidated Order of 1847, is appended the following note (p. 103) to Art. 178:—"It is not necessary that the certificate be obtained and produced to the guardians previous to the operation; but

the medical officer must have obtained the advice upon which the certificate is founded before he performs the operation."

Even should the Court have considered this too hair-splitting a replication to the wording of the defendant's plea, it might have been urged, 2ndly, that this case did not come under Art. 178, which states:—"Provided that, except in cases of sudden accident immediately threatening life, &c., &c."

Now, I deem that the *onus probandi*, that "the amputation of a finger" was for "a sudden accident immediately threatening life," rests entirely with the defence; and that, in default of proof thereof, or by a successful confutation of such proof, the plaintiff could recover his claim under Art. 177.

I shall be rejoiced if I have shown sufficient grounds to lead to Dr. Ody's being advised to prosecute this case to a more successful issue.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

February, 1857.

A PARISH DOCTOR.

## EFFECTS OF MENTAL EMOTION ON THE FŒTUS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case may interest those members of the profession who doubt whether the fœtus is affected by mental emotions of its parent to such an extent as to produce organic peculiarities:—

Mr. E—, aged sixty, presents a peculiarity of the irides, noticed by me during my attendance on him for an attack of acute rheumatism. The irides are prolonged downwards and outwards. His sight is particularly strong in the dark. The cause is ascribed by him, on the authority of his mother, to her having, when pregnant, been startled by the staring eyes of a cat suddenly affecting her nerves on entering a room at dusk. Mr. E— adds, that when a child he was separated from his mother, and continued absent till he arrived at manhood. On coming into her presence again, her only knowledge of his identity was the peculiarity above related.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

Newport, Isle of Wight, Jan. 1857.

E. P. WILKINS, M.R.C.S.

## Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of gentlemen who passed their examination in the science and practice of Medicine, and received certificates to practise, on

Thursday, January 29th, 1857.

DANIELL, WILLIAM COLE, Newport Pagnell.

HUGHES, WILLIAM EVAN, Bont Bach, Llanrwst.

KNAGGS, WILLIAM ANGELO, Brompton.

SMITH, WILLIAM, Preston.

WOODWARD, ALFRED, Bicester, Oxon.

THE BOARD OF HEALTH.—We regret to find that the Hon. Mr. Cowper has resigned the office of President of this Board.

PRESENTATION OF A TESTIMONIAL.—On Tuesday evening a very handsome silver cup, of beautiful design, and richly embellished with floriated patterns, was presented by the officers and members of the Loyal Leicester Lodge, Manchester Unity, to Hugh Robert Rump, Esq., upon his resignation of the surgeoncy to the lodge. It bore the following inscription:—"Presented to Hugh Robert Rump, Esq., M.R.C.S.E., by the members of the Loyal Leicester Lodge of Odd Fellows, M.U., as a tribute of their esteem and respect. Wells, Feb. 3rd, 1857."

DUTY ON TOBACCO.—Last year the duty on tobacco imported amounted to £5,070,388; that on cigars about £150,000.

DEATH OF OLD PEARSON.—The visitors to the Hunterian Museum will regret to hear that this worthy old servant of the College of Surgeons expired at his residence, Devonshire-street, Queen-square, on Thursday afternoon, aged seventy-four. Mr. Pearson had been connected with the College for nearly half a century.

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT COLLEGE.—The late Sir Hugh Richard Hoare, who was during his lifetime a liberal friend to the College, has bequeathed £500 to it by his will.

LONGEVITY.—There is a coloured man living at Woodstock, Vermont, U.S., of the age of 126.