

tation of an attack, as soon as delivered, from five to ten grains of calomel with the usual opiates 4tis horis, so as gently to affect the gums by the third day. The duration of the *general* epidemic was nearly three months after I adopted this plan, and not a single case of the *puerperal disease*, of any importance, during that period, occurred; although my intercourse with the erysipelatos disease was undiminished, and the cases of midwifery quite as numerous. This system of prophylaxis, I trust, will not be condemned by those who have had personal experience of the danger and difficulty of managing so formidable a disease in country practice.

Aylesbury, Nov. 14, 1834.

#### DRS. HUTCHINSON AND DAVIDSON.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—In noticing Dr. Davidson's letter of Feb. 21st, I shall confine myself to a brief narrative of facts.

Upon the publication of the case of Thomas Moss in *THE LANCET*, Dr. Davidson, without any previous intimation to me, made a complaint to the Committee of the Hospital, that I had violated one of its laws, by abstracting the treatment of a case under his care from his Case Book, without his sanction: immediately upon hearing this, I requested Dr. D.'s presence before the committee, and gave an explanation, with which Dr. Davidson declared himself perfectly satisfied. This result is recorded upon the minutes of the Weekly Committee's reports. Here I concluded that this affair had terminated, but I was subsequently informed by a medical friend, that Dr. Davidson had circulated in a Book Society to which I do not belong, observations reflecting upon my conduct in the publication of the case; I immediately wrote to Dr. Davidson, requesting and requiring to be informed what these were: I wrote three times, and received none but evasive replies: irritated by which, I addressed the letter to you, which has appeared in *THE LANCET*.—Dr. Davidson is quite correct in stating that before the Committee I gave my word of honour as a gentleman, that I had told the apprentice, Mr. Creek, to ask Dr. D.'s permission to have a copy of his treatment; this pledge I repeat, and solemnly affirm that I did request this of the apprentice, but it appears that he misunderstood me. I could anticipate no objection from Dr. D. because he knew, as well as I did myself, that it was my intention to publish the case. The copy from Dr. D.'s book, which

the young man sent down to my house, I transmitted to a medical friend in London, on the loose sheet upon which it was written, with my remarks upon the case, requesting him to read them before a society to which we reciprocally belong, if he thought proper, and then to send a fair copy for publication in *THE LANCET*. So persuaded was I that this report had received Dr. Davidson's supervision, that I did not examine it; and suppose that the errors which Dr. D. complains of must have thus arisen.\*

My motive in publishing the case, was to draw the attention of the profession to an alteration in the blood, which had also been observed in other cases of diabetes mellitus; but which had not been sufficiently insisted upon, and which very probably has been present more frequently than it has been noticed. The unworthy motives which Dr. Davidson has attributed to me I utterly disclaim, and can assure him, that as far as I am concerned, they have no existence excepting in the pruriency of his own charitable imagination. I preferred Dr. D.'s reports to my own, because when the patient was under my care, the nature of his disease was very equivocal; a considerable period elapsed before he entered the Hospital under Dr. Davidson. Diabetes mellitus was then clearly established, and I considered it desirable that the treatment should be given, up to the period of the poor man's death.

The vulgar personalities and inventions in which Dr. Davidson has indulged, excite no other feelings in my mind, than those of pity and contempt: I have considered the above explanation as due to the readers of *THE LANCET*, and to myself, and I have the honour to remain your very obedient servant,

R. HUTCHINSON.

Nottingham, Feb. 25, 1835.

March 2nd.—The last virulent attack which Dr. Davidson has considered it to be consistent with his character to make upon me (published since my letter of the 25th February was sent to the Editor) is totally unworthy of consideration. It bears with it its own refutation, and its utter imbecility is its own best antidote.

R. H

\* Viz.—“*Mist. Croton. Co.*,” for *Mist. Cretae Comp.*; and “*Acid. Hydrocyan. ℥j*,” pro dos,” for *Acid. Hydrocyan. gtt. i.*—What reader of *THE LANCET* could be misled by such errata as these?