

Mr. Tuson is not a medical man, and it does not appear that he has made any contributions to the science or literature of chemistry.

A. FLEMING, M.D., Chairman.

To the Council of Queen's College, Birmingham.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you allow me, a person quite unconnected with the management of Queen's College, Birmingham, to notice very briefly the severe remarks you have made upon the appointment, by the Council of that Institution, of Dr. Bond to the chair of chemistry?

I can see abundant reason why the Council should prefer Dr. Bond to Mr. Tuson; for, without detracting from the merits of the latter gentleman, you must admit that to this body he was in the position of an untried man; whereas Dr. Bond had been connected with the College for years, and, during a studentship of a prolonged character, had obtained nearly all the distinctions it had to offer. He was, and is, respected for his distinguished attainments, not only by the Council and Professors, but by his contemporaries. He took the highest position in this very science (chemistry) at an Arts examination in the London University; and after perfecting himself in this as in other branches by a residence in London, Paris, and Edinburgh, he returned, to have conferred upon him the office of medical tutor in his *alma mater*; since his appointment to which he has, I have no doubt, been constantly engaged as a chemical instructor.

"A tree is known by its fruits;" and I venture to predict that years hence, if his valuable life be spared, when it is seen how the duties of Professor have been discharged by Dr. Bond, you, Sir, will not quarrel with the Council for having made so good an appointment. I have no hesitation in stating my honest belief that he will reflect honour upon the office and the College, and eventually prove to you and the profession that *he* at least is in the "right place."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Derbyshire, Aug. 1858.

M.D.

* * We did not express any doubt of the general medical attainments, or of the intelligence of Dr. Bond. The vacant post was one in which special chemical knowledge and experience was the main test of fitness. From the present statement it appears that Dr. Bond possessed a College prize against Mr. Tuson's twelve years' experience in teaching at hospital schools. That Dr. Bond is an accomplished physician, and fitted excellently to hold the post of *medical* tutor are very good reasons for electing him to almost any other post in the Queen's College medical department than that of professor of chemistry.

SIR CHARLES BELL'S PAMPHLET.

[NOTE FROM DR. BROWN-SÉQUARD.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your last number there is a note, from Mr. H. Parratt, suggesting that it might prove useful to science to publish a new edition of Sir Charles Bell's pamphlet. It would, I think, be well to give the largest publicity to this little work, not only because it is the first product of the genius of its author, and his first attempt at so great a revolution as that which has been directly or indirectly accomplished by him, but also, because it is important to enable anyone to judge exactly what the first views of Sir Charles were; and if Mr. Alex. Walker was right when he affirmed that Bell supposed that "the anterior spinal roots contained fibres for sensation as well as for motion," while the posterior roots governed the "operations of the viscera" and the "secret operations of the frame," and "united the body together." (See THE LANCET, Nov., 1848.)

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

Rue de Dragon, Paris, Aug. 1858. ED. BROWN-SÉQUARD, M.D.

ON PEPSINE.

[LETTER FROM DR. CORVISART.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If, relatively to pepsine, a few typographical mistakes had not slipped into THE LANCET (July 24th, 1858), I do not think I should have taken up my pen to answer Dr. Nelson's article on the same subject (7th instant).

According to the notions of propriety admitted amongst us, professional men of all countries should feel respect and practise courtesy towards one another. Then I do not hesitate to declare that I most sincerely regret that my article "On Pepsine and Galen" should have lent to Dr. Nelson, of Birmingham, an opportunity for uttering abusive language against Dr. Chambers, whose vast medical learning and genius are, in France and in the scientific world at large, duly and greatly honoured. I should feel most ashamed if the well-bred English readers of THE LANCET had come to think I had not refuted Dr. Chambers's medical opinions or statements with firm but equally courteous arguments, just as may be properly and justly done by anyone claiming that which he considers as his rights. And, accordingly, I hereby protest; hoping that the English public will kindly trace a well-defined line of separation between Dr. Nelson and myself.

As to Dr. Nelson's own claims, I am truly confident that, in the historical portion of my aforesaid article, I have done him justice by classifying them after M. Rilliet's, of Geneva. It is neither according to marginal annotations written down in the closet with pen or pencil, snuff-boxes bearing data of any ordinal or cardinal sort, nor even grateful gentleman-patients accompanied by most obliging and timely-coming friends, that priorities are appreciated and decided: it is only according to datas of printed papers. If Dr. Nelson seriously wishes to be reputed as having the priority he claims, he must answer to this one question—

"What book, before 1858, has been written on *Pepsine*, or any *peptic* preparation, by Dr. Nelson?"

If Dr. Nelson produces any *probatum* observations published (not kept by himself for private use),* and authenticated, prior to 1854, his claims will be established and admitted at once; but if not, he will continue to be reputed as possessing neither claims nor rights to this priority.

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

L. CORVISART, M.D.,

Physician in Ordinary to his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the French.

Palais de St. Cloud,
August 24th, 1858.

[I make use of this opportunity for submitting to your subscribers the following errata, which will elucidate certain passages in my article "On Pepsine and Galen" above referred to:—Page 83, col. 2, line 2, *ex horum* instead of *extrorum*; *factus* instead of *factur*; line 4, *sibi* instead of *cibi*; line 5, *ex ipsis* instead of *excipiis*; line 34, *omniaque* instead of *omnique*; lines 35 and 55, *caerent* instead of *cuvent*; line 57, *lepori* instead of *leporis*; line 62, *quadrupedum* instead of *quadrupedem*;—page 84, col. 1, line 35, *si* instead of *se*; *ex dicere aggrediar fluxa* instead of *docere aggredior*; line 36, *merito* instead of *merita*; line 70, *fluxu* instead of *fluxa*.]

IS COD-LIVER OIL A MEDICINE OR AN ARTICLE OF DIET?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having perused, in THE LANCET of Aug. 14th, the letter of Mr. G. F. Wills to the Poor-law Board upon the above subject, I cannot refrain from expressing my surprise at their reply—viz., that "the Board consider the above oil to be a medicine, and consequently that the medical officer is bound to supply it at his own expense unless there be a special provision to the contrary in his contract. If, however, at the time when a medical officer enters into an agreement with the guardians of the union for the supply of medicine &c. to the poor, it was not understood that he was to supply cod-liver oil, the Board would be prepared to consider any recommendation which the guardians may make for an addition to his salary, on the understanding that he will in future provide the article at his own expense," &c.

In answer to so extraordinary an announcement, emanating from such high quarters, I think the medical profession has a right to know why the Poor-law Board consider the article in question to be a medicine, when it is opposed to high medical authority and physiological facts. Dr. A. T. Thomson, in his work on "Materia Medica," (2nd edition, 1835, p. 1,) plainly defines what a medicine is, for he there says: "*Medicines* of an animal and vegetable nature *differ from food* in containing

* Even as to what may be said of the data of that which may be called Dr. Nelson's private observations, although this data, in itself, be of little import, it may moreover be seen that the same is right posterior to the statements in the first column of my article, page 83. But I verily regret to enter into such tedious particulars, for I suppose that Dr. Nelson at no time attentively read my letter "On Pepsine and Galen:" for all that he has already said or may wish to say about this, in the present or the future, I shall beg of him to peruse it over again.