

discussions upon general principles and questions of practical importance, rather than upon isolated cases, having no interest beyond the moment, proved abortive by the rejection of my communication; and having attended but few of the meetings since I joined the Society, I withdrew my name about a twelvemonth ago, the circumstances connected with my withdrawal being stated in the preface to the paper, which was printed for distribution among the fellows.* Nevertheless, I do not cease to take an interest in the Society in a national point of view, and in its not being behind-hand as regards analogous institutions elsewhere. How far the president was justified in assuming the authority of putting a stop to any remarks which fellows might be disposed to make at the annual meeting, for the express purpose of considering matters connected with the regulation of the Society, it is for themselves as a body to determine, as also whether they will be satisfied with his statement, that "the council have always endeavoured to do the best for the Society at large," and it is to be hoped that at the next meeting, on the 1st of May, full right of discussion will be claimed by those who may wish to make any observations, or to suggest alterations which may conduce to the advantage and efficiency of the Society.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

London, March, 1849.

EDWIN LEE.

ST. MARYLEBONE INFIRMARY.—THE HONORARIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am one of those poor general practitioners who have reason to be grateful for the way in which you have fought for the rights of our poor oppressed profession. But what permanent good can be done for us while we are traitors to ourselves?

In the *Times* newspaper I, not long ago, read an advertisement from the guardians of the poor of St. Marylebone, calling upon physicians to send their diplomas and testimonials, and so forth, and to attend the board personally, in order to get a chance of being appointed "honorary physicians" to the said poor.

Will you be so kind as to inform us whether this does not mean that the candidate is to do the work of that rich parish of dukes and lords, and richer commoners, for nothing?

Surely, Sir, if this be the case, and if it be really intended to get such "honoraries," there must be something in it more than any plain man can understand. I suppose that no member of any other profession could allow himself thus to be made use of, without being at once cut by his followers.

But there may be the profit, of great value to many pures, of practising on the poor, and of advertising connected therewith. Then, in that case, these pures ought to be made to pay for the situation, and the sum to be publicly fixed.

Finally, what is the use of these honoraries? The public has a right to know that clearly, and the guardians of the poor to see that they are not made use of for any purpose. To whom is an unpaid officer responsible? Are the poor to be turned over to the tender mercies of these unpaid?

Oh, Sir, if you had the misfortune to live by the practice of our wretched profession, you would feel acutely for us, and do something at once effectually to protect us from the competition of those who ought rather to hold out the hand of friendship to us. And in doing this your own knowledge must tell you that you would at the same time be doing an essential service to the poor.

For my part, if I ever meet any pure who may hereafter consent to become a party to the advertisement alluded to, I should scarcely refrain from telling him that the force of humbug could no farther go.

They will no doubt refer to hospital doctors. But I insist that even these ought to reside and do their duty, and be paid well for doing the same; but I fear the latter only is now done.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

PHILIATRUS.

COUNTER-PRACTICE.—WHAT IS AN APOTHECARY?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Through your columns I call the attention of the profession to a case in one of the county courts, reported in *The Times* and *THE LANCET*, in which the Apothecaries' Company

were the plaintiffs. The counsel for the Company, quoting the opinion, or I should rather say the decision, of the superior courts, gave the following as Lord Denman's definition of those coming under the Act. Lord Denman said, that a person compounding medicines and selling them, though he did not make out prescriptions like a physician, nor keep a shop, acted, nevertheless, as an apothecary in the ordinary sense of the word, and that it made no difference if he prescribed as well as prepared his medicines. Now as, I presume, no person will question the decision of certainly one of the most able and upright of the judges in England, have we not, at length, discovered a remedy for one of the greatest anomalies and one of the greatest hardships that ever beset a learned or unlearned profession? I allude to the making up or preparing of medicines by ignorant men calling themselves chemists and druggists, as well as the constant habit of counter-prescribing, (which has been lately designated, by an elegant evasior, "suggesting.") Now is the time for the profession to come forward and by a small subscription of say five shillings, sweep from society prescribing chemists, preparers of patent medicines, and those men who fill the Sunday papers with disgusting and immoral advertisements, and thus protect society and themselves from ignorant and presumptuous tamperers with human life. Is it rational to suppose that those constant accidents that are occurring in chemists' shops by inaccuracy in making up medicines, would occur if properly educated persons only were to be found behind the counter? But the great argument to be addressed to the profession is—Will they, after this opinion, allow those men to snatch the hardly-earned crumb from their mouths, and after spending their time and money in acquiring a profession, see the emoluments of it snatched away by those who have lost nothing except the cost of the bottles necessary to fit up the shop?

The custom of counter-practice is rapidly increasing, and if something be not done, and done quickly, by the profession, the bills and reports of parliament will be useless; and soon in self-defence every young general practitioner will be forced to open shop.—I am, Sir, with every feeling of respect,

March, 1849.

R. S.

HALIFAX UNION:

MEDICAL RELIEF TO THE POOR.

A Summary of Orders, Visits, and Medicines supplied to Poor Law Patients, in the Halifax District. Area, 990 acres; Population, 19,881.

	For the Quarter ending Dec. 25, 1848.	For the Quarter ending March 24, 1849.
Number of Orders for Medical Attendance, from the Relieving Officer	194	225
Visits to the Residences of Patients...	541	510
Mixtures dispensed	1029	1052
Pills.....	3157	3606
Powders	663	572
Lotions	36	46
Liniments	45	32
Boxes of Ointment	36	47
Plasters	79	132

Remuneration for the duties specified in the first column, and the supplies above recorded, £20, or, 2s. per case.

Remuneration for the duties specified in the second column, and the supplies above recorded, £20, or, 1s. 9½d. per case.

This table is correct.

FREDERICK S. GARLICK,
Medical Officer for the Halifax District.

THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND UNIVERSITY GRADUATES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In connexion with many acts of injustice, the perpetration of which is contemplated by the celebrated "Principles," I would beg to allude to the effects of one of the measures in the proposed Charter of the College of Physicians. In that Charter, provision is made for the admission into the college without examination, of all British graduates, provided they be not engaged in the practice of pharmacy; but it appears to be the intention of the college to deny this privilege to graduates of British universities who may hereafter relinquish general practice, and who may wish to assume the rank and exclusive duties of a physician. I am much at a loss to conceive upon what principles of common sense or consistency the college has arrived at the conclusion, that a graduate who has been for several years actively engaged in cultivating the field of medical science, which an extensive general practice

* The Brain the Sole Centre of the Human Nervous System. Any provincial fellow, or other member of the profession, interested in the subject, may obtain a copy on application to Mr. Churchill.

has afforded him, can be less competent to discharge the duties of a physician than if he had commenced the exclusive practice of a physician fresh from his university, his experience limited, and his judgment immature. You must be aware, Sir, that the sphere of observation enjoyed by a young physician in the present day is very contracted; and unless he be aided by some fortuitous circumstances, his title is little more than an empty name, and his coffers much in the same condition. Surely it cannot be contended, that a man who puts his title in abeyance for a time, for the purpose of obtaining a larger scope for the investigation of disease, and for carrying more effectually into practice the principles of the "ars medendi," which he has acquired at the schools, has, by so doing, disqualified himself for entering upon what has been termed the higher walks of the profession. I believe there are now in general practice, in various parts of the kingdom, several graduates of universities of the highest reputation in the country, whose object, on entering the profession, was ultimately to practise as physicians, to which end their general, as well as professional education, had special reference. If the present anomalous plan of legislation obtain the force of a law, one of two things it will be necessary for them to do, either to practise independently of, and unconnected with, the College of Physicians, or to submit to the humiliating alternative of undergoing an examination before a tribunal which now pronounces them to be entirely qualified physicians, if they think proper to practise as such, but which requires their qualifications to be tested by examination, should they for a time have availed themselves of the opportunities afforded them, by general practice, of enlarging their acquaintance with the practice as well as the theory of their profession.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Maldon, March 24, 1849.

GEO. P. MAY, M.D. Edin.

FORGERIES IN QUACK ADVERTISEMENTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As THE LANCET has been always prominent in exposing fraud and abuse in medical matters, will you allow me to call your attention to an advertisement relative to "Dr. Locock's" Wafers, and which appears in a publication entitled "Con Cregan," bearing my name thereto, and which is thus headed—"Cure of Ten Years' Asthmatic Cough."

"Extract of a letter just received from T. M. Griffith, Esq., Vavasour-square, Bath Avenue, Dublin. Dec. 7, 1847."

I now beg publicly to deny it, as having been either directly or indirectly my production. It is the production of some heartless scoundrel whom I do not yet despair of discovering. The facts are briefly these:—From my boyhood, until within the last few months, I have been a resident in Dublin, and just about the date the advertisement appears, 7th Dec., 1847, I had letters from almost every medical establishment of the same stamp as "Dr. Locock's," in answer, as they termed it, to my inquiry. On one or two occasions I succeeded in getting the letters returned, purporting to have been written by me, but as yet have been unable to discover the writer. About the same time,—that is, prior to its publication,—the agent, a Mr. Macarthy, in Dublin, called at my house, to inform me he had a letter from Da Silva and Co. here, saying that I had written to them, with the testimonial in question; and then I not only distinctly denied and forbade him to publish it, but also showed him a host of letters I had been annoyed with, when a friend here, a few days back, put into my hand the little publication with the "Locock" advertisement in. I instantly called on the agents, Da Silva and Co., but I never could see the principal, and my interviews with his representative were not at all satisfactory. I was astonished that they could have the presumption to bring before the public an advertisement that had been distinctly denied and contradicted. I need not say that I have suffered much private annoyance, and indeed, I may also add, injury by it; and your allowing this a place in your columns will oblige, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

London, March, 1849.

THOMAS MAGNUS GRIFFITH.

** Our correspondent has made us fully acquainted with his address and occupation.—ED. L.

THE APPEAL ON BEHALF OF MR. ALEXANDER WALKER.

In a note which we have received from Dr. Willis, since the appearance of our leading article of last week, the learned translator of "Wagner's Physiology" remarks:—"At this time, and as I am situated here, I do not see how I could be of any

use among the list of treasurers or committee of the fund in Mr. Walker's behalf. Well informed of his merits as an original inquirer into the functions of the nervous system, however, I deeply sympathize in his necessities, and have the pleasure to inclose you a cheque for a guinea, which, pray be so good as to add to the other contributions to the Walker Fund,—and oblige, your very obedient servant,

Barnes, March, 1849.

R. WILLIS."

** We have placed the donation of Dr. Willis in the hands of one of the treasurers of the fund residing in this metropolis.—ED. L.

THE NAVAL MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A Manchester medical student being anxious to know whether there are such appointments as dispensers on board any of her Majesty's ships, allow me, through your columns, to inform him, there are not at present; the duties of dispensing being performed by the medical officers of each ship. Should he be disappointed by this answer, let him not, I beseech him, meditate joining the service upon his obtaining his diploma; as by so doing, he will always regret the misfortune he has had of joining a service, where medical men are detained in an ignominious position for the purpose of being the guardians and directors of boys commencing their naval career; for this question is often asked now by our opponents, "What are we to do with the youngsters, if we give you cabins, and allow you to become ward-room officers?" It will be unnecessary to allude more to that question, it having been so frequently answered.

Let, then, your Manchester correspondent clearly understand what treatment he may expect in the present enlightened age, as a medical man, in her Majesty's naval service: a chest, necessarily small, to contain all his stock of clothing, his books,—unless indeed he wishes to trust them in a midshipman's berth, where books are found of essential service in offence and defence in the science commonly called "sky-larking," a science so abstruse, that few of our medical men, unless, indeed, those who have had the misfortune of serving in her Majesty's naval service;—the chest must also contain his case of surgical instruments, as well as his washing utensils—a heterogeneous medley!! It only wants cooking utensils to complete it. He must sleep in a hammock; in some ships, on the deck, and in close contact with the marines; in other ships, separated from them; on arising in the morning let him content himself to sit on his chest, with his glass in his hand, and shave himself; let him then place his washing utensils on the lid of his chest and complete his toilet for the day. Then, in the berth, let him make up his mind, for some hours of the day, to use his strenuous exertions to keep some order and regularity amongst the rising Nelsons; the rest of the time he can spare from his medical duties, to self-improvement, if such a thing is possible for him in a midshipman's berth.

I fear, Sir, I have trespassed too much on the kindness you always exhibit towards naval assistant-surgeons, both in word and deed, but I trust these remarks may be of service to your correspondent, as well as impress upon the friends of our cause the degraded position we must remain in until a redress of our grievances is granted, which redress can only be obtained by their aid and our own exertions.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

March, 1849.

M.R.C.S., R.N.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.—The following gentlemen having undergone the necessary examinations for the diploma, were admitted members of the college at the meeting of the Court of Examiners on the 30th ult.:—

ANNESLEY, THOMAS, Portadown, Armagh, Ireland.
FRESSAUGES, HENRI FRANCAIS, Mauritius.
GUPPY, THOMAS STAKES, Sidbury, Devon.
HUMPHRY, JOHN, Deal, Kent.
IZOD, FREEMAN, Esher, Surrey.
PAYNE, STURLEY, Norwich.
PERRY, WILLIAM, Stonehouse, Devon.

At the same meeting of the Court, Mr. JOHN ELLIOTT passed his examination for naval surgeon: this gentleman had previously been admitted a member of the College, his diploma bearing date July 28th, 1845.