

had commented on it, it would have been most important if you could have imputed an erroneous or false certificate to Mr. Glover, either as to granting it without inquiry, or as to the object for which it was granted. But here the question for the jury is, whether he was warranted in the circumstances in which he granted it, and for the purpose for which he granted it. Therefore I cannot allow the question to be put.

Mr. MACKENZIE.—Would you be good enough to take it down. I have no more questions.

By the DEAN.—The Lord Advocate told the deputation he would inquire into it, and take it into consideration. I do not know that the result of that consideration has not appeared.

## GLOVER VERSUS SYME.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—While visiting a medical friend to-day, I saw THE LANCET of this week, containing your editorial remarks upon the trial of this case, in which you make most unjust statements in reference to the eminent judge who presided at the trial. Whatever may be the merits of the action between Glover and Syme, or your estimate of the Lord Justice-Clerk's charge, you are not justified in sacrificing truth to make your arguments more telling.

The insinuations against the learned judge are freely made. You tell a story about the trial of Collinson for murder, and you state that, after conviction, not only was his life saved by the interference of Professor Syme, but that his lordship was preserved "from the commission of a gross judicial blunder," which was, that at the trial of Collinson "the Lord Justice-Clerk *did not call* one of the medical men who had treated the woman in the Infirmary;" and you end by plainly insinuating that at the trial Glover v. Syme, his lordship revenged himself by charging the jury against the defendant.

Now, Sir, this is most unjust, and must have been written by a person completely ignorant of the forms of criminal trials in Scotland. In this country the judge *never calls witnesses*, and the Lord Justice-Clerk, in Collinson's trial, could not have called "the medical men who had treated the woman in the Infirmary" as witnesses, any more than he could have called the woman herself from her grave. Calling witnesses is the duty (on the part of the prosecution) of the Lord Advocate alone, and if there was blame attachable anywhere for the lack of medical evidence on that trial, the crown lawyers are responsible, and not the judge. Appended to the indictment, served upon the accused fifteen days before the trial, is a list of witnesses to be adduced against him, and it is incompetent to examine any but those therein named. This list is prepared by the crown lawyers, and at the trial laid before the judge, who for the first time hears the evidence laid before the jury by the Crown, on the one hand, and the accused on the other. You therefore see that your remarks are founded upon false data, and that the whole insinuation contained in the article complained of is undeserved; and you are bound at once honestly to withdraw the same, and to acknowledge the error into which you have been led—unintentionally, it may be.

I say nothing about the merits of the case Glover v. Syme further than this, that there are to be found abundance of people, as wise and as well-informed as either you or the editor of the *Caledonian Mercury*, from which you quote an article on the trial, who think the verdict perfectly well-founded, and express a hope that it may teach the "first surgeon in Europe" a useful lesson, and do him a great deal of good.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,  
25, York-place, Edinburgh, Jan. 1855. JAMES BELL, L.S.C.

\* \* Mr. James Bell is altogether mistaken. The "gross judicial blunder" from the commission of which we represented Mr. Syme to have saved the Lord Justice-Clerk, was that of hanging a man for the murder of a woman who died of delirium tremens. We suppose this is clear enough. We do not profess to be conversant with the intricacies of Scottish criminal law, but we do say that to try a man for the murder of a woman, and not to examine as witnesses the medical men who attended the latter between the time of the alleged violence and her decease, was the performance of a very serious but most absurd burlesque in the sacred name of justice. The Lord Justice-Clerk *did* preside at that trial,—he *did* sentence the prisoner,—he *did not* make any effort to show the deficiency of the evidence to the Home Secretary, and, but for the exertions

of Mr. Syme, an act which we do not hesitate to term a perfectly unjustifiable execution, would have been consummated. Mr. Bell does not defend the system of receiving secondary medical evidence. He cautiously confines himself to the assertion, that in the case of Collinson the Lord Justice-Clerk was not to blame. But look at the charge of this same judge in the case of Glover *versus* Syme. His harangue was throughout an apparent attempt to defend and uphold from the bench, the validity of that monstrous kind of secondary medical evidence which so nearly led to a legal catastrophe in the case of Collinson. Mr. Syme is not the man we take him to be if the late unjust verdict over which Mr. Bell chuckles so complacently, teaches him anything else than a determination to act as he has hitherto acted, whenever such a case as that of Collinson or Clark may occur, and this without reference to any personal or other considerations, save those of truth and justice. Mr. Syme has manfully pitted himself against the system of secondary medical evidence hitherto tolerated in Scotland, and the Lord Justice-Clerk has put himself forward as its defender. We shall see who carries the day eventually—the Surgeon or the Judge.—[Ed. L.]

## Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

## ANÆSTHESIA BY COLD IN SURGICAL OPERATIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The experience of the last few weeks has proved to my complete conviction, that local anæsthesia can be obtained by the benumbing influence of ice, without resorting to the administration of chloroform, which by its subtle power renders insensible the system generally, and occasionally produces those fatal effects to which almost every surgeon can bear testimony. I have tried the ice in several cases, in both hospital and private practice, and in almost every instance the success was evident, the patient when blindfolded being ignorant of the use of the knife. It affords me great pleasure to confirm the evidence of Dr. Arnott upon this interesting subject, and to draw the serious attention of surgeons, both at home and abroad, to this agent, whereby patients can be freed from the pain which attends many every-day operations we are called upon to treat with the knife, and reserve chloroform for those very severe cases where either the duration of the operation or the depth of structure requires the employment of that potent agency.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Arlington-street, Feb. 1855. THOMAS WAKLEY, F.R.C.S.

## MILITARY SURGERY AT ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Finding that some of the metropolitan hospitals have been noticed in the papers as having placed at the disposal of Government a number of their beds for the military casualties now arriving in this country from the Crimea, I think it but justice to the authorities of this hospital respectfully to request your insertion of this note, with the enclosed letter, addressed to the Right Hon. Sidney Herbert, when it will be seen from the date that they were not only the first to make such a proposal, but that, in addition, they were anxious to establish a Chair of Military Surgery in connexion with their school.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,  
St. Thomas's Hospital, Jan. 30th, 1855. R. G. WHITFIELD, Resident Medical Officer.

St. Thomas's Hospital, Nov. 14th, 1854.

SIR,—Under the sanction of the Treasurer of this hospital, I take the liberty of writing to inquire whether, in the event of his being ready to appropriate a considerable number of beds for the reception of military casualties, as they arrive in England from the seat of war, it would be agreeable to the Government to avail themselves of this arrangement, by ordering such cases to be conveyed to the hospital for treatment.