

rending struggle for a profession they have not the means of attaining. I am also of opinion, that any locality which is capable of supporting a medical man, will equally well maintain a druggist; for even now, in the country, this trade is combined frequently with another. In my last I spoke of the expense of dispensing; let us look over our files at our drug bills (buying pounds and dispensing grains), phials, paper, corks, to say nothing of the expense of the assistant or apprentice, the errand boy, &c. Are not all these things expensive? Would it not be an addition to our domestic comforts, that no hireling was present at our meals—that we were no longer obliged to retain one whom we could ill afford to keep? Would not this be a great saving, not only in comfort, but expense? I shall not dwell on Mr. Johnson's remark, in regard to the accuracy of dispensing and quality of the drugs supplied by the druggist, for the practitioner would be negligent indeed who did not inspect the shop from which his drugs were supplied.

There is one subject which has, as far as I can learn, hitherto escaped the attention of writers on medical reform. I allude to the highly reprehensible practice of medical men in London and the larger towns keeping what is called "open shops," in which diplomas, and all the attractions of glitter, gas-light, and gilding are ostentatiously paraded. Is not this a degradation to the profession? A member of a royal college, a man of talent, a gentleman, selling a pennyworth of jalap over a counter! How are the mighty fallen! How are the public to discriminate between them and the druggists, since both parade in their windows "Advice Gratis?" I firmly believe we have brought this evil upon ourselves; we gave them the first blow, and they have returned it with interest. The profession will never be respected or respectable, till this system is put down. There is an evident break down in the "*pill and draught*" system; but why insist so much on dispensing as to offer to do it gratis? What! give a half-crown for nothing? No! give your advice for the half-crown, and let them get the "*bottle*" at the druggist's.

Fearing to intrude too much on your valuable columns, I conclude for the present,

And subscribe myself,

Your constant reader,

JAMES TUNSTALL, M.D.

Dawlish, Devon, Dec. 20, 1841.

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—In the present state of the profession, and when its amelioration is so much a subject of consideration, I deem it due, alike to my professional brethren and myself, to submit the subjoined statement of *facts* to the readers of your extensively circulated and valuable periodical, and purposely abstain from the expression of any opinion or feeling on the subject, being perfectly satisfied to leave it altogether to the good feeling of yourself and the profession, to comment upon its character.

On the 23rd December, between the hours of 12 and 1, p.m., I was called upon by a gentleman who took me in his carriage to visit a lady, who, he said, had fallen and injured her wrist. On making examination, I found fracture of the radius, about the commencement of the lower third. I was preparing to adjust

it, when Mr. Nesham, a surgeon of long established and extensive practice in this town, arrived, and who, at my request, gave me some assistance in bandaging the arm. When we had finished, he said "Now Mr. Maughan, I leave this case with you." Upon arriving at the door, I asked him if he was the medical attendant of the family, to which he replied, "Oh! no; they are quite strangers to me;" but, as this is an awkward case, I shall be happy to render you any assistance which lies in my power. I thanked him for his kindness, and said, as I should have to visit my patient in the evening, I should be glad to see him at that time, if perfectly convenient; to which he readily assented, observing that, if he was prevented coming himself, his partner, Mr. Annandale, would do so in his stead. Six, p.m., was the hour fixed; I was punctual to my appointment, and on entering the drawing room, was surprised to find Mr. Annandale with the bandages and pasteboard splints which were applied in the morning removed from the arm. There was also present Dr. White, a physician of considerable practice here. As soon as I entered, Mr. Annandale very coolly remarked to me, that he had been informed by Mr. Nesham, that I had discovered a fracture in the morning, to which I assented. After examining the arm for some time, he (Mr. A.) observed to Dr. White, "Here it is" (the fracture). Almost immediately after the arm was bound up again (in which operation Mr. A. took a prominent part); he and Dr. White left the room together, whilst I remained a minute or two, to give directions to my patient. On going down stairs I observed Dr. White and Mr. Annandale talking together in the passage; as soon as they saw me, Dr. White turned round and passed me hurriedly, saying to me, as he passed, I wish to speak a few words to Mrs. D., (my patient) if you will walk on with Mr. Annandale. When we had left the house, Mr. A. remarked to me, that it would be only professional, in case Mrs. D. had a family surgeon, to give her the option of having his attendance on this occasion, which he had desired Dr. White to ascertain *for him*; if not, to ask which of us two, she wished to attend her, which would save us clashing, as it was not a case to require the attendance of two surgeons. I replied that if Mrs. D. had a family surgeon, I should be happy to resign the case to him as a matter of course, if not, I should certainly consider it to be mine. On calling the same evening on Dr. White, he told me that Mrs. D. had not a family surgeon; that her husband, being absent, she did not know how to act; but that, on his arrival, at home, she would consult with him, and communicate their decision to us the next morning. When I called on Mrs. D. in the morning, I found that Mr. Annandale had been there before me, and she intimated to me that, being an *old acquaintance*, her husband and she wished him to have the management of the case, expressing at the same time that their decision was not actuated by any want of confidence in my professional qualifications.

To this statement, I have merely to add that, as Mrs. D. had no family surgeon, I being the first who was called to her assistance, considered myself entitled to the charge of the case, and, having been established in practice but one twelvemonth in this town, I conceived that, being deprived of it, thus summarily, was calculated to do me a professional injury.

It is from no vindictive feeling that I have made public the above particulars, but from a persuasion that, if such cases were made known when they occur, they would occur less frequently than they do at present.

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. B. MAUGHAN, M.R.C.S.L.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

Jan. 1, 1842.