

Editor's Letter Box.

POOR-LAW MEDICAL REFORM ASSOCIATION.

LETTER FROM R. GRIFFIN, Esq.

SIR,—I have addressed a letter to the Right Hon. Viscount Palmerston, with a statement of the grievances of the Poor-law officers, and remarks on sanitary measures and vaccination. A copy is now in the press, and will shortly appear in the form of a pamphlet, for distribution to each member of Parliament and Poor-law medical officer.

I beg to lay before your readers the annexed correspondence between Mr. Fox and the Romsey guardians, which speaks for itself. I can only add, that I hope no gentlemen (especially a colleague, as in the case of the late vacancy in the Frome Union) will be found to accept the appointment, and thus verify the words of the Poor-Law Board, that "whenever a vacancy occurs, there are plenty of candidates for the office, and therefore there is no need of increasing the salaries."

Let the profession be true to itself, and the guardians will be compelled to do Mr. Fox justice by re-appointing him at an increased salary, which undoubtedly he merits, or they surely would not have permitted him to hold the office during the last twenty years.

I am, etc., RICHARD GRIFFIN.

12, Royal Terrace, Weymouth, January 5th, 1857.

i. Mr. L. O. Fox to the Board of Guardians of the Romsey Union.

December 20th, 1856.

"GENTLEMEN.—I beg respectfully to state that, as the price of articles consumed in conducting a union practice, viz., corn, hay, and horseflesh (not to mention double income tax), has advanced, I am compelled to apply for an increase of salary. I would remind the Board that my present stipend is only 13s. 10d. per week for attendance on the sick paupers in a population of 1,400, over an area of 5,000 acres—a sum quite inadequate to the duties required.

"I am, etc., L. OWEN FOX."

ii. Copy of Proceedings of the Board of Guardians.

Romsey Union, December 29th, 1856.

"The application of Mr. Fox, medical officer, for an increase of salary, for reasons stated in his application, was considered, and it was moved, and resolved unanimously—

"That, at the special meeting held this day, the Board declined to augment the salary of Mr. Fox; but, in case Mr. Fox should be dissatisfied with the present rate of payment, the Board will be happy to receive his resignation.

"Ordered that the clerk do forward a copy of this minute and resolution to Mr. Fox."

iii. Mr. Fox to the Board of Guardians.

December 31st, 1856.

"GENTLEMEN.—I beg to inform you that I cannot continue my services as medical officer on the present terms, and therefore give you notice that, on and after 26th January next, I shall resign my appointment.

"I am, etc., L. OWEN FOX."

MEDICAL ETIQUETTE.

LETTER FROM J. R. HUMPHREYS, Esq.

SIR.—The letter which you published last week from Mr. A. G. Field is an apt illustration of the old adage, "There are none so blind as those who won't see." Your correspondent seems to throw a doubt on the statements which I made in the JOURNAL of the 13th December, as to whether Mr. Long did or did not consult with the homœopath. Now, sir, I beg to inform your correspondent, that Mr. Long not only consulted with the homœopath, but approved of what he had done; and Mr. Long met the homœopath on two or three occasions. Mr. Field objects to my suppositions being taken as facts: the only supposition I advanced was, that Mr. Long took his fee; and I think that is a very reasonable supposition for me to make, as I do not suppose Mr. Long would come from Liverpool without his fee, to meet a homœopath whom no one in Shrewsbury would meet in consultation. Your correspondent thinks that by answering to the summons of a patient who is attended by a homœopath, "he does not sacrifice the honour or dignity of his calling." Now, with all respect to his judgment, I think he does. He draws the line between right and wrong so faintly, that he cannot well keep on the right side of it. I think it

would be far more consistent with his dignity if he—and all others who possess similar latitudinarian principles—would not pander to the caprices of their patients by meeting those who, according to Mr. Field's own admission, are practising a delusion. Your correspondent says, "as a body we have no place till each one gains it by his individual character and excellence." To a certain extent this is true; but I would remind him that he has a duty to perform to his profession as well as to himself; and that is, he ought not to sanction by advice or counsel those whom our profession as a body has clearly and unmistakably announced to be none of us.

I enclose you a copy of a letter which appeared in one of our town newspapers. It will, I hope, satisfy even Mr. Field's scruples with respect to the statement I made in my former letter.

I am, etc.,
J. R. HUMPHREYS.

Shrewsbury, Jan. 6th, 1857.

[COPY.]

To the Editor of the Shrewsbury Chronicle.

SIR,—As it appears some misconception prevails with regard to the causes of the decease of the late lamented Mr. Corbet of Sundorne, in consequence of one of his medical attendants being a homœopathist, I am desired by the family to state, for the satisfaction of his friends, and as a simple act of justice to Dr. Wilkin:—1st. That Mr. Long, the eminent surgeon of Liverpool, who was called in at an early period, was satisfied that everything had been done that could be done, to avert the fatal issue—an opinion which was afterwards fully confirmed by Mr. Fergusson of London. 2nd. That both these eminent men were convinced from the character which the malady assumed in its last stages, that the case had been beyond human aid for a very considerable time previous to the development of the symptoms which first induced the lamented deceased to call in the aid of Dr. Wilkin.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant, B.

Sundorne, Dec. 6th, 1856.

DOUBLE OPERATION FOR CATARACT.

LETTER FROM EDWIN CHESHIRE, Esq.

SIR,—I find, in an article by Mr. J. V. Solomon, published in the ASSOCIATION JOURNAL for December 27th, 1856, the following passages:—"The traditional practice of the Birmingham Eye Infirmary, which was founded in 1823 by Mr. Hodgson, has been to extract hard cataracts, the pupils having been previously dilated; to delay the operation till the patient is quite blind, or nearly so; and to remove both cataracts on the same day, while the patient is in the recumbent posture; the upper section of the cornea being performed in the right eye, and the lower in the left. . . . A cataract having been extracted, the surgeon at once directs his attention to the means that are likely to obtain an early union of the wound. In furtherance of this end, I esteem it of importance that the upper section should have been made in the left eye as well as in the right. I have succeeded in accomplishing this upon patients whose eyes are not prominent relatively to the brow, and in some who experienced a difficulty, through nervousness or other causes, in looking downwards at the time of the operation."

I beg to say that it is, and *always* has been, the practice of my colleague Mr. Townsend and myself to perform the upper section of the cornea in *both* eyes, when operating by extraction for double lenticular cataract, whenever the nature of the case has permitted such a proceeding. I would also further state, that it was my invariable custom to perform the upper section in *both* eyes long before Mr. Solomon was connected with the Eye Institution; and, if I am not mistaken, similar operations were performed by Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Middlemore. It certainly is the practice of the Birmingham Eye Infirmary to extract both cataracts at the same operation; and the result having been so satisfactory, I see no necessity for putting the patient, who usually can ill afford the time, to the annoyance and inconvenience of a second operation, and the confinement to the house consequent thereon. I fully agree with Mr. Solomon in the propriety of removing a single cataract, whether traumatic or otherwise, *when dislocated, and producing by its pressure and displacement very severe pain and irritation.*

I am, etc., EDWIN CHESHIRE,

Senior Surgeon to the Birmingham and Midland Eye Institution.
Birmingham, January 2nd, 1857.