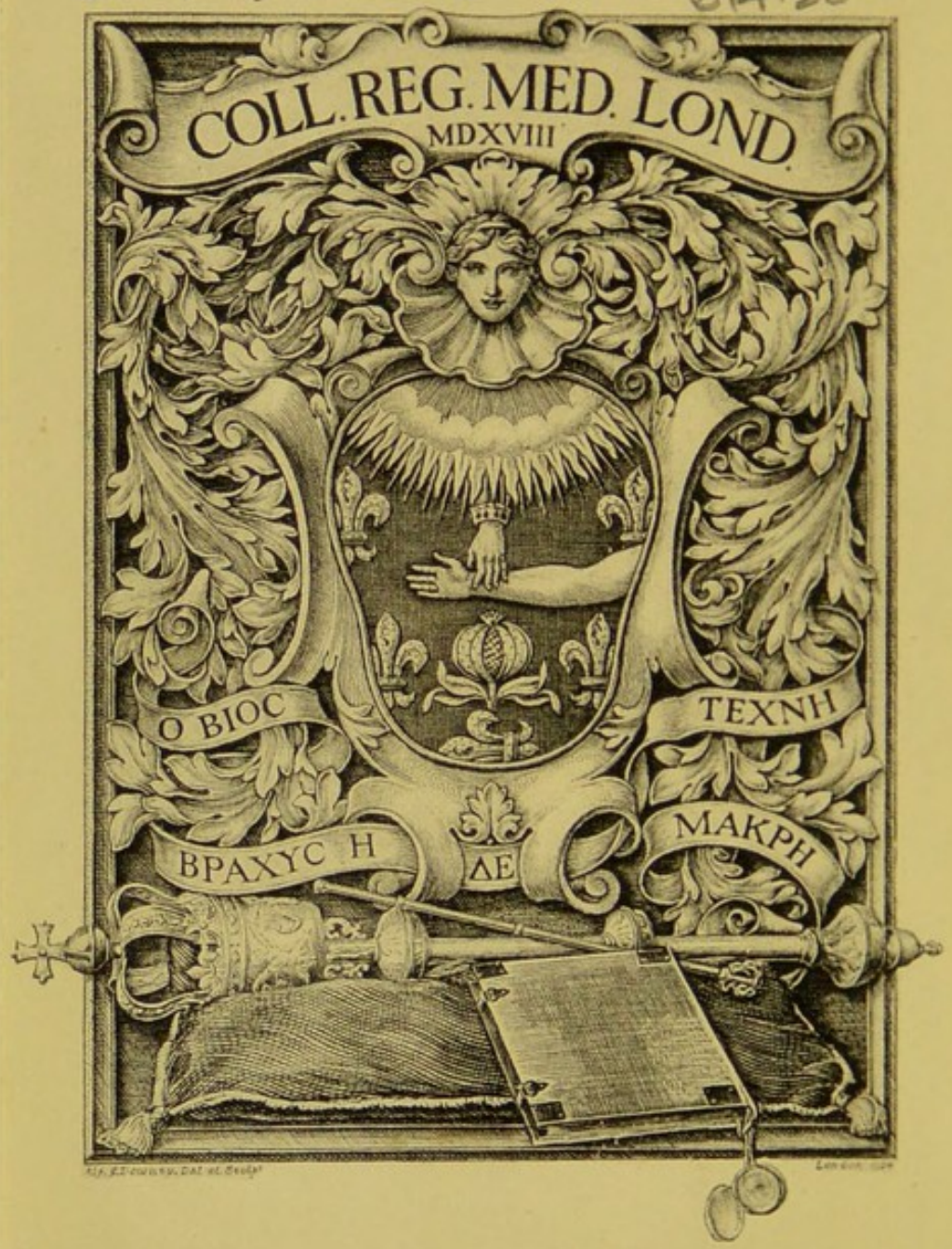
Medical politics : being the essay to which was awarded the first Carmichael prize, of £200, by the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland, 1873 / by Isaac Ashe.



CARMICHAEL PRIZE ESSAY,

1873.

MEDICAL POLITICS:

BEING

THE ESSAY

TO WHICH WAS AWARDED

THE FIRST CARMICHAEL PRIZE, OF £200,

BY THE

Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland,

1873.

BY

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PREFACE.

THERE does not seem to be any sound *a priori* reason why the Profession of Medicine should be held in less honour, or occupy a lower place in public esteem, than the sister Professions of the Church or the Bar, the Army or the Navy. The application of the skill of the physician or surgeon is more immediate, personal, and direct than that of an individual in any of the other professions we have named; and yet these are the essentials of highly valued service. A criminal's life may indeed be saved at the bar of justice by forensic skill, but we doubt if the legal profession would regard this as their highest claim to public recognition or appreciation. Medical skill confers the benefit of direct saving of life on the highest and noblest, not merely on the criminal. It is therefore obvious that the source from which arises the higher honour awarded by the State to the other professions is, a conception of the value of their aggregate service, not to an individual, but to the State as an aggregate conception; for that it is State honour which raises the rank of a profession is evident from the comparatively humble position occupied by

the clergy of dissenting communions, whose functions are nevertheless of no minor importance from a moral and religious point of view than those of the clergy of the State church. Now, the conception of the value of aggregate service rendered to the State by the other professions we have named was, in former ages, out of all proportion great as compared with the conception of that rendered by Medicine. And necessarily indeed; for while the Army and Navy were the acknowledged guardians of public safety against foreign foes, while the Bench was looked on as the fountain of justice and the custodian of civil rights, while the Church was regarded as the saviour of the national morals, Scientific Medicine had as yet no existence: nay, even her parent, Science herself, was yet unborn before the time of Bacon, and had hardly emerged from her childhood a hundred years ago. What wonder then that the State recognition of the services of Medicine should as yet be so small in comparison with the true value of the services rendered. What wonder that it has hitherto been maintained that Medicine confers benefits on the individual only, or at best on the State only by an aggregation of such individual benefits. We can hardly doubt that in founding the prizes which bear his name, and to which the present essay owes its origin, the keen eye of Carmichael saw the error underlying these views; saw that the time had come when Scientific Medicine might fairly claim that her State services were the equal of those of any other profession whatsoever. Nay more, it can hardly be doubted that he saw

that the very State itself, to which the services were rendered, was so changing in its essence as to bring the services of Medicine more and more to the front, as compared with those which formerly occupied that position. For the State which saw that the other professions conferred on it higher service than did Medicine, consisted to all intents and purposes of the King and the governing classes only. The Army and Navy were the King's forces, employed principally in his personal or family quarrels, or in maintaining an *ancien regime* in accordance with the feudalistic prepossessions of himself and his ministers. The Church, as constituted by her Divine Founder, was meant to deal with individuals, and their personal relations to the things which are not seen, nor is there any higher or nobler mission; and by many it is nobly discharged; but the priestly caste had added to this sacred function a political one, that, namely, of constituting itself the supporter of Divine right, its own, the King's, and the nobles', alike over the bodies and souls of men, to whom it preached passive obedience, and endurance of any tortures or outrage that armed and uncontrolled arrogance might choose to inflict in this world, under threats of something worse in the world to come in case of recusancy. The central Courts of justice were completely under the power of the King, and subservient to him; the nobles held the same relation to the local courts; and the sentences of the Star Chamber, the gibbet law of Halifax, and the bloody assizes of Taunton, testified how much regard was paid to

the interests of the people in the administration of justice. We have, it is true, changed all this, and our Bench and Bar are now models for the world in the integrity and ability with which they discharge their high functions; nor is the honour in which they are held incommensurate with the magnitude of the interests committed to their charge. But the possession of the *mens sana in corpore sano*, the removal of dirt, disease, and the low scale of morals induced thereby, will ere long be seen to ensure public morality, and national safety, better than extremity of punishment, or mere moral discourses, too often heard, which can in any case only reach the public ear when medical science shall have done its preliminary work of cleansing, sanitation, and physiological regeneration. The preservation of the lives of the people will, ere long, appear to be of equal importance with the guardianship of their property; while the development of a healthy and vigorous race of people will be seen to be a necessary preliminary to any sound defensive measures against foreign foes.

The State, as thus vitally benefited by Medicine will thus be seen to be composed of the entire people, high and low, rich and poor alike. True, the State as thus constituted is only now coming into existence, and is, accordingly, only now beginning to demand the services of Medicine, and her parent Science, in its behalf; the services hitherto rendered by both have been unasked and unacknowledged. But day by day as this,

the true State, grows and strengthens and develops itself, will the services of Medicine become more marked and important, and therewith, we cannot but expect, more fully recognised and acknowledged.

It was with the view of directing to the consideration of these subjects the attention of that profession which would naturally be entrusted with the carrying out of these objects that Carmichael founded the present prizes. Some have spoken of them as if they were mere incentives to youthful ambition. No such idea appears in the founder's will; he obviously considered the subject one worthy of the attention of all members of the profession irrespective of age or position; otherwise he would have offered a mere youth's prize as the incentive to thought and labour. And when a Member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons itself, and Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in its School, descends into the arena and becomes a candidate for the prize, it is obviously mere jealousy that can endeavour to slight it as intended for youthful competitors.

We subjoin an extract from the testator's will, which will show that he knew well this subject was one of national importance, and concerned with the highest interests of the people, and therefore deserving of the best attention of the leading members of the medical profession.

Extract from Mr. Carmichael's *Will.*

"In my will dated 11th of February, 1849, I bequeathed £3,000 to the College of Surgeons in Ireland, the interest arising from which sum is to be disposed of in the following manner:

"Every fourth year after the investment of this sum in the funds of the College, a premium of £200 to be adjudged by the Council of the College for the best essay, and £100 for the second best essay on the following subjects:—

"1st. The state of the Medical Profession in its different departments of Physic, Surgery, and Pharmacy in Great Britain and Ireland at the time of the writing of these prize essays.

"2nd. The state of the Hospitals and Schools of Medicine, Surgery, and Pharmacy.

"3rd. The state and mode of examination, or of testing the qualifications of candidates of the different Licensing Colleges or Corporations in Medicine, Surgery, and Pharmacy.

"Under these three heads the authors will please to make such suggestions as may occur to them respecting the improvement of the profession, with the view of rendering it more useful to the public, and a more respectable body than it is at present. In these suggestions the authors will please to consider the preliminary and moral education of Medical and Surgical Students, as well as the best mode of conducting their professional studies.

"In considering the 3rd head, or mode of testing the qualifications of candidates by the licensing bodies, the authors will please to consider the most practicable mode of rendering the examinations as demonstrative as possible, *i.e.*, in anatomy, by having the dead subject placed before the candidate. In chemistry, botany, and pharmacy, specimens of minerals, plants, and pharmaceutical preparations placed before him; and in the practice of physic and surgery, the candidate to be placed before the patients in the wards of an hospital, as the testator is certain that this will afford the most certain and only true mode of ascertaining the qualifications of candidates.

"On handing the sum mentioned of £3,000 to the College, my Trustees will please to have a legal guarantee that the provisions

above stated will be carried into effect, as well as the publication of both of the prize essays to the extent each of 700 copies, to be disposed of in the following manner: Copies to be sent free of expense to the Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Councillors, or Governing Members of all the Medical Colleges or Corporations of the United Kingdom. The authors of the successful essays to be entitled to 25 copies each. The remainder to be sold, the produce of which to go to the premium fund. Copies should also be sent to all Cabinet Ministers and Members of the Privy Councils in both countries."

ISAAC ASHE.

Londonderry District Asylum,
November, 1873.

CARMICHAEL PRIZE ESSAY.

1874.

We live in an age of constitutional change. Venerable institutions, which have lasted for hundreds, nay thousands, of years, and which seemed to have become interwoven with the very life of the nation, are pronounced unsuited to the changed circumstances and conditions of the present age, and are either required to modify themselves so as to place themselves in harmony with those circumstances, or, failing that, are swept ruthlessly away by the flood of long pent up popular opinion.

We may point to the Established Church of Ireland as an instance of the latter result, and to the many and important changes slowly taking place in the University system in illustration of the former. And, in truth, educational systems possess a greater power of self-adaptation to changing circumstances than ecclesiastical, or many other institutions; their conservatism is not so rigid; personal and private interests are less directly and powerfully affected by any required change; and their corporate form of government permits more readily the introduction to their Councils of younger men who see more readily the direction in which the current of thought and feeling is running, and who possess more pliability and power of moulding themselves and the institutions with which they are connected, in accordance with the aspirations and wants of the day. And the fact is keenly recognised and practically insisted on by the public, that all national and social institutions exist for their benefit; and hence arises the jealousy with which they watch such institutions, the rigor with which they demand that such changes shall be adopted, as shall preserve to the fullest

extent the utility of the institution to themselves, (and that according to their own idea of their requirements, rather than according to their forefathers' idea of their own requirements) and the ruthlessness with which, if such changes fail to be self-effected, the whole of such institutions are swept away, and new ones more suitable and better adapted to the time and age, are erected in their place.

Nor is it a matter of insurmountable difficulty to ascertain and define the direction which such changes must take in order that the ends desired by the public may be attained. For there is hardly any grand general or constitutional idea that arises in, and by degrees fairly possesses, the minds of men with regard to the general constitution of the State, which does not soon find itself re-echoed, or, as it were, mirrored in miniature, with regard to the constitution of each separate institution, organisation or Corporation within the State. The direction of men's thoughts with regard to the State at large, is the result of the growth and development of certain general principles of action or of government; hence, it cannot be, but that these same general principles should be applied to all the minor concerns in which the same persons interest or engage themselves. And in harmony with these great principles the minor institutions must move, if they are to retain their place in the social organisation, or their utility to the public under the changed, and ever changing, conditions of modern thought.

Two such great principles seem to have taken firm and universal possession of men's minds at the present time.

The first is the principle of organisation; of the union of many to effect a common purpose; a clear realisation of the fact, of which nature affords us so many examples in the animal world around us, that a given desirable object, which one alone is utterly powerless to effect, may yet be attained or effected with ease and certainty, if only several will combine with a common purpose, and co-operate for the attainment thereof.

This is the principle which lies at the root of all the trade-unions of the present day, and which has raised the artisan to the position of a veritable power in the State, however much his ignorance of economic laws may misdirect the force of the gigantic and powerful organisation he has called into existence.

This principle, expressed in the common proverb "Union is strength," will be found, if only we can bring ourselves under its sway, one of the most potent influences in raising the medical profession to that position in public and State as well as in social estimation, to which its services, both public and private, and the learning and ability of its members so fully entitle it.

The usual purpose for which organisation and co-operation are so much resorted to at the present day, may be generally stated as being one which aims at the amelioration of the condition of those who so unite, of their circumstances and relations; their improvement in mind, body, or estate; if organisation fails always to attain the end it aims at, it fails, not from want of power in the machine, but from want of knowledge how to guide it among those who employ it. Its power is enormous, and the ends above specified are good in themselves and desirable, though charity forbids the arriving, or even aiming at them, to the detriment of others, or by any mode which prefers private interest to public weal. But if the mighty machine is directed with a due knowledge of, and regard to, economic laws, no such evil results will follow to others, nor any ultimate reaction fall, as now too often happens, on those who employ it.

And the second great principle now fermenting in men's minds is that of self-government; the assertion of the right of men of mature minds to direct their own concerns and course of conduct; to be allowed to think for themselves, and to study and manage their own interests as none other either can or will; the assertion that not only voluntarily organised societies possess by their essential constitution these

rights, as well as individuals, but also that societies which have become such only incidentally, as it were, by fortuitous circumstances, by natural growth and development, or even by simple aggregation, that these societies, nevertheless, are not to be ruled over by an executive either self-appointed or constituted from without, but by one of their own free choosing and selection.

In the application of these two leading principles of the present day to the internal politics of the medical profession, we think we see the way not only to bring the various medical corporations more into harmony with the public feeling of the day, and to render them more capable of efficiently discharging their highly important public functions, but also to increase the efficiency, to elevate the status, and augment the emoluments of the profession as a whole, and of its individual members in their respective spheres.

These two principles shall form, as it were, the text of our present essay.

We have to discuss various questions connected with the medical profession which come within the range or field of view selected by the clear-sighted and deep-thinking founder of the prizes which bear his name, and which have given occasion to the present competition. He requests writers under his testament to make suggestions regarding the improvement of the profession, with the view of rendering it more useful to the public, and more respectable in itself as a body. We conceive that what he desired was not so much a description of what is, or has been, as a series of suggestions, carefully argued out, as to what ought to be, what changes may be required in order to bring the profession more into harmony with the needs of, and the tone and direction of thought in, the present day, and this both as regards the corporations at the head of the profession, and the entire profession itself regarded as one body, and as an important portion of the social system. And on the discussion of these questions the principles above enunciated will, we conceive,

have an important bearing. And when he desires that suggestions shall be made with the object of rendering the profession a more respectable body than it is at present, we conceive that this embraces at once the question of the respect in which the profession as a whole shall be held by the public, whether it shall be regarded in its true light as being that profession which most of all benefits, and is of most importance to, the social body, and also the question of the respect and esteem in which each individual member shall be held by those about him as being a member of the profession, and personally as an individual.

We believe that principally by elevating the tone, feeling, education, position, and influence of the individual members of the profession in relation to those around them, and in return the respect of the latter for them, shall we succeed in elevating the entire profession as a whole in the view of society at large. And certainly no profession presents more elements of success, or better materials for handling, in the endeavour to attain this end.

As regards the moral capacities of the members of this profession, where is there to be found more self-sacrifice, more calm courage in the midst of constant danger, more earnest and incessant labour, more bowing down of the head and heart and soul in care and anxiety for others? Every element or condition that tends to ennoble the moral faculties of man, to refine his feelings, to deepen his sympathies, to kindle his charity, to augment his self-abnegation and increase his care for others, is to be found in the daily work of the physician, just as much as every element or condition that can elevate and train his intellectual faculties, is to be found in his daily studies.

Not that the profession as a whole prospers in consequence of this moral and intellectual merit in its members; for while other professions are labouring, organising, scheming, for their own advancement, and for the establishment of their power over society, ours has so completely forgotten its common

interests in individual self-sacrifice, that to this day it remains, as it has been well described, for all practical purposes, a disorganised rabble.

And what is the necessary consequence? The contempt of the public for the profession as a whole; well-nigh the disowning by the other professions of their noblest sister, as hardly of common blood with them; and, in the case of the individual physician, the constant blame and incessant wrath of the public, because he fails to remove the curse of death, or the inevitable penalty of their own habits of conduct and neglect of all sanitary laws. They call on him to solve the most abstruse and complicated problems that science presents, the problems of organisation and vitality, in which the exact elements are fewer and smaller, and the variable elements more numerous and dependent than in any other study of science; they call on him to know that which has not yet been discovered, and to be capable of correcting a deviation from the normal the true nature and cause of which has not yet been ascertained, nor even the true nature and cause of the normal processes which have been deviated from; and if instinct fails him, thus groping in the dark, if he is unable, like the sleuth-hound, to run down by scent the prey he cannot see, if radical vitiation, inherent weakness, or unknown peculiarities of constitution, if occult climatical influences, latent properties of drugs, or any other of the unknown and mysterious sequences of nature thwart his best and most earnest endeavours, then they cry "The doctor mistook the case;" "the doctor did not know what to do;" "the doctor was very much to blame;" "we won't consult him again;" "the question is, did the patient die of the disease, or injury it may be, or did he die of the doctor?" These are the comments of an ignorant and ungrateful public; and woe betide the unfortunate attendant if the case happens to be one of public interest, it may be of party feeling, and he has to appear in a public court of justice, and falls into the clutches of an unscrupulous lawyer, who regards the case as

political capital, and who, by malignant insinuations and nefarious perversions of fact, makes it appear that the bullet, or knife, or bludgeon of the assassin did no harm, perhaps that it was not even meant to do any, but that the surgeon, who spent his days and nights in anguish through harassing anxiety for his patient, he it was who killed the man, and who, perhaps, if justice were done, ought to stand in the dock, instead of the prisoner, his client. Have any of us heard of such things? Have any of us, it may be, felt them? Have any of us writhed under the unjust loss of reputation from the cruel handling of an ignorant public? Have any of us had to endure a civil action for failure where success was impossible; for failure due to the patient's own carelessness or obstinacy, or even his own undoing of the surgeon's work; for failure where time, and skill, and labour, and thought, and anxiety, and sympathy not to be bought for money, were freely lavished, and nothing was received in return, not even payment for bare time, not even the empty acknowledgment of thanks?

Have the public tried these problems themselves? Do they know their difficulty, or the many causes that tend to unfavourable results, and the adverse influences that at every step beset the physician in his labours? No; their knowledge of science is not even sufficient to enable them to understand the statement of the problem, not to say to be competent to undertake its successful solution. Yet there is no allowance made for the physician if he fail in this solution. It is the old formula—"There is but one decree for you, make known the dream and the interpretation thereof, or ye shall be cut in pieces."

There is, moreover, to a sensitive mind much of sadness in the professional work itself. It is not merely that the physician suffers through sympathy with the sorrow of others which he is powerless to remove; it is not merely that he must witness the desolation of the home, the anguish of the widow, the helplessness of the orphan, or the deep sorrow of

the bereaved parent; it is that by the very nature of his profession he has undertaken to fight a losing battle; however often he may turn the tide of defeat, he must in the end be beaten in every case. Death may yield his prey for a while, but is sure of holding it at some time or other; victory may attend the efforts of the physician for a little, but defeat is certain at last. Such is the very engagement we serve under, the very nature of the warfare we undertake. Very different is it with the lawyer, for whom if victory is won it is won finally and for ever; or with the minister of the Gospel, who fights his battle with the aid of a higher Power, and to whom defeat, however often sustained, is but the prelude to a promised, certain, and final victory. Yet, perhaps even for us also, when the sword is at last broken in our hand, and the enemy whom all our lives we have fought on behalf of others prevails even over ourselves, when the post assigned can be held no longer, and the last defeat is sustained, then, perhaps, even for us also, may sound our Captain's approving welcome "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

But now defeat is sure to follow even on a temporary victory. Death is not to be persuaded to give up his victim for ever, and though the public know this as well as we do, yet in every individual case of such defeat the physician is blamed as though he were the actual cause of the patient's death, as though the fatal result were due directly and immediately to his treatment.

How shall these things be changed? We fear there can be little improvement until the public shall have been so far educated in science as to have some conception of the difficulty of the physician's problems, and until we so remodel the profession that even their dissatisfaction, groundless as it is, may pass off as a mere *vox et præterea nihil*, without harm to the physician who has so earnestly laboured on their behalf.

Again, as regards the intellectual relations of the profes-

sion to the public at large, in no profession is there more generally or constantly found, in no profession or class of men is there more widely or universally extended, that knowledge of science on which, in this latter half of the nineteenth century, society is every day more and more dependent. In no body of men is the scientific method more fully attained, or the scientific tone of thought and cast of mind more fully developed. The doctor, as a remarkable lawyer lately said in a court of justice, is the head intelligence of his district. The whole bent of his studies tends to enlarge and expand his mind, to give him wider views, and a deeper insight into nature than his neighbours possess. The study of the physician is not physic, as some suppose, but physics, φυσις, Nature in all her aspects, all her workings, all her developments. He is the representative of science in his neighbourhood, as the clergyman perhaps is of classical literature. His it is to observe facts which lie hid from the popular eye, and out of them to evolve general laws which are far beyond the popular conception; and thus he is the embodiment of the inductive principle, as the clergyman perhaps may be said to represent the deductive. He is the representative of the inquiring, testing, demonstration-seeking spirit, as the clergyman is of the didactic spirit, or that of dogmatic instruction. He seeks to erect across the flood of ignorance a bridge of solid masonry, built on firm piers, which shall rest on foundations of rock; as the other, shall we say, flings a suspension bridge from point to point in regions too far aloft to be reached by the architects of science. All honour to both, while labouring for the advancement of the army of truth; they can never interfere with each other if both will only confine themselves strictly to their respective spheres. To the clergyman belong the words of God; to the physician His works; as we might go on to say that to the lawyer belong the words of man, and to the engineer his works. Such high position do we claim for the physician in the intellectual life of this mighty

nineteenth century, and a corresponding position in its social life we maintain that he is rightly entitled to; nor will society have duly attended even to its own best interests until it shall assign him such.

And there are some indications that society will ere long recognise the high importance of the physician as the representative of science within his district; some signs that, if we exert ourselves in this direction, men will ere long see in us fitting directors of the minds of the youth of this country into those channels of thought and study in which they will best be trained to a knowledge of the world in which they live, and of their place in it. Too long has dogma, inculcated on the grounds of authority alone, and on such grounds blindly accepted, withstood the scientific progress of the national and popular mind; too long has the training of the young been under the direction of those who knew nothing of science, except that it was the inflexible opponent of such merely authoritative dogma. And the stunting and crippling of the popular mind has been the sure and necessary result. Yet truth has nothing to fear from any other truth; mutual illustration and illumination is the only and necessary result from their juxtaposition and comparison. And now, accordingly, the cry is for science; now the importance of free thought is recognised; now the truth is perceived, that after a certain period the mind must not be kept in leading strings any more than the body, if any manly development is to be attained. But directors of education after this fashion are wanting; the schools—nay even for the most part the universities—have failed to appreciate the position; the place is vacant for scientific men; and scientific men, men trained by virtue of their very profession in the habits of thought, the style and tone of science, are present, one at least in the centre of each district, to fill the place. What hinders but that they should do so? We believe that it is partly want of energy, and partly a failure to perceive the importance of such a movement as regards the elevation of the individual

and his profession in the popular estimation; add to this the uncertainty of a medical man's hours; the earnest claims upon his thought and labour; the opposition of many who may be interested in maintaining the old *regime*, or startled by the novelty of a medical man seeking to benefit his locality, or finding relaxation for himself in anything except the stock amusements, conventionally permitted to the doctor, of hunting, fishing, and shooting. Yet, we say, the place is vacant for the medical man to step in and fill with great benefit to the community, and ere long (for we must wait a little for the benefits to be derived from the introduction of any new idea) with no less advantage to the profession, in the higher estimate which will be formed by the community of its social importance.

We do not, of course, mean that the physician is to usurp the sphere of the schoolmaster; we do not mean that he is to engage in the actual routine work of teaching, or teaching for payment, which properly belongs to that functionary. But we mean that on all school boards the physician ought to be present as the representative of science, and as the force working in the scientific direction; and that alike on such boards, and also where they are not as yet formed, his scientific power could be used so as to become operative on society as a vast scientific influence, a vast educational influence, in the direction alike of instruction pure and simple, of the formation of a capacity to receive instruction, of a taste for scientific knowledge, and a development of the scientific method of thought. And the acknowledgment by society of the physician in this capacity, and the high esteem in which he, in consequence, and through him his profession, would come, ere long, to be held, would be more rapidly arrived at were the medical man in each district, or locality, to assume the position of leader, according to his abilities, of popular thought in the direction of science. We say, to assume the position, for the place is vacant, he has nothing to do but step into it, and few, indeed, are the localities where

there would be found any person competent to dispute it with him.

How is this to be done? There are various modes by which each man in his own district may find an opening for labours by which he may largely benefit his fellow-men, and raise the profession at the same time in public estimation. The various literary societies, mechanics' institutes, and associations for mutual improvement, which are to be found even in small villages—or if not yet to be found in any given place, might be organised—all present so many opportunities for work in this direction. The Kensington science and art classes will afford a valuable field for labour, by an active utilisation of the physician's scientific knowledge, in the way of lectures to classes under this department; and where such classes do not exist, good work might be done by the organisation of independent classes for the study of science, free and unsectarian associations for the discussion of social and scientific subjects; by such means as these will the ideas of the people by degrees be advanced beyond the rigid formulas, narrow conceptions, and restricted fields of investigation, in which formerly stones were supplied in satisfaction of the craving for intellectual food.

And in return for labour in these fields, that reward of high estimation will be accorded which is indeed always conceded to the leading mind when actively and disinterestedly employed in labouring for the benefit and intellectual advancement of others.

Is such a movement as we have sketched out above to be despised by the profession, as having too slight a bearing on their social position? We, on the contrary, think that the importance of such a movement, if general, could not be overrated; nay, more, that as regards ourselves it would result in a further and continuous cultivation of that scientific knowledge, and those philosophical habits, capacities, and modes of thought which the studies of our medical schools commenced—too soon, alas, in most cases, to be laid aside amidst

the severe labours of an undervalued and thankless profession. Yet why to be laid aside, if only a little more toil, a little more energy, a little more perseverance, be devoted (after weary days and nights it may be, nay must be) to our own further culture, and the elevation and advancement alike of our own profession, and of the world around us in wisdom and knowledge? What good might not be accomplished if each medical man, in his own district, were to spend an hour on one evening in the week in explaining to an ignorant, yet eager, audience the physiological constitution of their own frames, the hygienic requirements of Nature's inexorable laws, the physical conditions of the world in which we live, the chemical nature of the bodies with which we are surrounded, and the wonders of the microscope; nay more, (for many of our highly intellectual band could traverse many other fields of Nature), the differences in the structure of animal frames or vegetable organisations, the succession of periods of life on our globe, and the wonders of the heavens; or even (as some, we are convinced, would be found competent to do) the lessons to be drawn from history, our position in the world's life, and how we came there, and the laws which govern the social, political, and economical relations of man to his fellow-man, of men in the mass, as found in our complex forms of modern civilisation.

Farther, a slow movement has lately begun in a certain direction, which we hail with joy, as tending in time to place our profession more surely and securely in its proper relative position in the world—namely, the seating of medical men in Parliament, as the exponents of the scientific thought of the day. And we maintain that medical men, when relieved by brilliant success from the necessity for the active practice of their profession, are eminently fitted to hold such legislative positions—not merely from their acquaintance with the scientific requirements and sanitary wants of the time (though on these two things mainly depends the progress of the nation in civilisation), but because, even in more strictly political

matters, they are more free from class prejudice, more open to argument and sound reason, more in sympathy with the political ideas of the day, more likely to march in the van of progress, while yet avoiding extravagance and vagaries of theory, than any other distinct and separate class of the community is likely to be. Not only their scientific education, but their large contact with the world, and their freedom from any special class interests, point them out as pre-eminently fit to be the leaders of even political thought in this age.

And for the attainment of such political position, and the proper filling of such post if attained, hardly any course could be so suitable as that of taking the lead in the scientific, educational, and socio-political thought of the day by each medical man in his own locality and sphere, which we have above enlarged upon. Thus, and thus perhaps only, will society learn to lean on the physician as the representative at once of science and intellect, and of free and advanced thought; as the true pioneer of a nation's progress, the man most in sympathy with a people's wants, and the leader whom they may most safely follow in the march of civilisation.

But in order that the average medical man, the country physician and surgeon, may be able to hold such a position with admitted superiority, and with the ease which only a familiar acquaintance with science can give, it ought to be the aim of our colleges and corporations to ensure such acquaintance on the part of all those who present themselves in future to receive qualifications in this, the most scientific of the professions. A thorough scientific education ought to be required of all who present themselves for the preliminary examination, for a young man's time is so much occupied afterwards with special study that he can have but little leisure to go back again on what ought to have been the occupation of his school days. Nothing is gained by turning out men who cannot maintain the respect of the public by their scientific acquirements. Such men merely degenerate

into drug dealers—lowering the profession both by the style of their practice and by their overstocking a district or town with men nominally qualified, but really quite below the standard of respectability which is necessary if the profession is to hold, as it ought, an equal position with the Bar or the Church, the Army or the Navy. And why should it not hold such a position? Why should it be open to the *Athenæum* to say, in a review on this subject in August, 1868 —and, we fear, to say with only too much truth—that the difference in position between the well-beneficed rector and the country practitioner is so great that there is really no comparison between them? This states "things as they are, not as they ought to be." But why should they be so? The work of the country practitioner is certainly not less arduous, certainly not less important to the district, or to the nation at large, than that of the well-beneficed rector, while it undoubtedly requires no less education and ability; surely, then, either the position of the one must be unduly exalted, or that of the other unduly depressed, perhaps both. And yet so long as the medical man makes the greater part of his living by his drug accounts, instead of rising to the dignity of a professional gentleman, and charging for his advice, that is to say, his time and skill, only, whether he supplies medicines or no—so long, in fact, as the overstocking of the profession compels him to combine the functions of physician and druggist, so as to pocket the profits of both, in order that he may have bread to put into his children's mouths—so long the other professions will look down on us as eking out our professional livelihood by retail trading.

It may be said it is easy for the Church, with its vast endowments in land from the State, and its lordly bishoprics, to maintain a position of respectability; or for the Bar, subserving such high social functions, and with its splendid judicial positions in prospect; or for the Army and Navy, devoted to the defence of the country, and constantly recruiting the higher orders of knighthood and the peerage from its

ranks; while none of these things belong to the profession of medicine. But we reply that this is to mistake an effect for a cause. True, it may be, that in former days, while science and medicine were unknown, these professions made for themselves positions superior to what medicine now holds—made them by their mighty influence on the welfare of kings and princes, and such other powers that be, or rather that were. But in this nineteenth century the power that is is the people, and to none of the above professions does medicine yield in its beneficent influence on their welfare; and this is every day more and more recognised. Medicine has, accordingly, now to vindicate for herself a place second to none—slowly, it may be, but, if she will be true to herself, none the less surely. Hand in hand with her walks the mighty and ever-growing power of science, whose votaries are not yet constituted into a profession, but may perhaps ere long be so; or rather, since they nearly all belong to the profession of medicine, they may come to be regarded as a branch of that profession, and thus add to her claims to distinction.

We think, moreover, that the day is not far off when every man shall have to win his peerage by his own personal distinction, rather than in virtue of being "the tenth transmitter of a foolish face;" and when that day arrives, men of science and eminent physicians and surgeons will be found in the list just as often as any others.

But, as we say, medicine must be true to her own interests. For one great cause why the above-mentioned professions are better able to maintain a high position in public estimation than medicine does is this, that they are all, in some way or other, kept as close professions, into which only a definite number of persons are admitted; while medicine is open to every comer who can merely, with the help of a grinder, pass a couple of easy examinations. In the Church, the Army, and the Navy, a definite berth must be open to the applicant before he can be allowed to enter the profession of his choice; while the Bar has had the wisdom to limit its numbers almost

as strictly as one of the united trades. But in our profession a man has only to pass, and then must look for his bread by bidding against his fellows. And since there is no other barrier, numbers of young men from the farmer, the artisan, and the trading classes seek its portals as the only means in their power of rising to a professional level, which they forthwith reduce again to their former rank by introducing the customs of trade, its business, and sources of emolument, into what ought to be a profession strictly. Never can this lowering influence of trade be got rid of in our profession until a barrier shall be established, analogous, if not in its mode of operation, at least in its results, to that erected by other professions, and until the numbers competing in rivalry against each other shall thus be effectually lessened; so lessened that not only shall a pecuniary position be attainable by each member of the profession, corresponding to that of the other professions, or even something more, to make up for the want of the splendid prospects open to them, but also that this income shall be capable of being attained without descending from the professional grade to that of a trade, which ought to be relegated strictly to the chemist and druggist. The fact is this, Society cannot do without us; and the need of our services, especially in the public service, is every day becoming more and more felt. We have, therefore, only to limit our own numbers sufficiently, and Society will have to raise our position and increase our emoluments in accordance with the terms that we may dictate. If the income capable of being earned by ordinary country physicians and surgeons—practising as such only and not selling medicine—is good, say equivalent with that of the well-beneficed rector, and if the emoluments of those of superior class are equivalent to those of high-class barristers and minor Church dignitaries, then—since Society must have men of the highest class as Lunacy Inspectors and Commissioners, Poor Law Commissioners, and, ere long, Sanitary Chief Inspectors and Commissioners, or in offices corresponding with these in the Local Govern-

ment Boards—these functionaries must, in order to allure them from lucrative practices, be accorded positions and emoluments equivalent to those of the judges and bishops, and, we venture to think, for the discharge of functions no less important and deserving of such return.

It is, no doubt, difficult for the metropolitan consulting practitioner, making from, say, £3,000 a year in Dublin or Edinburgh to ten times that sum in London, to realise the fact that the profession is overstocked. He does not feel it, being the fortunate occupant of an exceptional position. Yet when we consider the long number of years which must elapse before the metropolitan practitioner can begin to put fees in his pocket, or to acquire that reputation among the public which he may have had perhaps years previously among his professional brethren, we cannot but see that there is something astray, some adverse influence at work, which prevents the rise of men of intellectual eminence and high professional ability until the best of their days are over. And this adverse influence is clearly the result of the double system of entering practice, the backstairs of the profession, the trading system which we have alluded to, prevalent indeed in large towns, but almost exclusively resorted to in the country. The medical man, with, nominally, a physician's and surgeon's qualification, not only supplies medicine to his patients—which any man, as matters are at present, may by sheer force of circumstances be compelled to do,—but he charges for it, and in fact sells medicine only, to any persons who may ask him for it, under the fiction that by asking for it they become his patients, though he may perhaps give them no advice whatever.

Indeed in the country, and country towns, a man's professional remuneration sometimes consists of charges for medicine only—laying him open to the allegation that, as every man makes his livelihood by selling the most valuable thing he can offer the public, the doctor's medicine must be of more value than his advice. This advice-gratis system is the bane of the profession, from the highest to the lowest, and from all

points of view. It lowers the estimate formed by the public of the particular individual in his own district. It drives the more highly educated physician, the gentleman who will not lower his status to the practice of a trade, from the country district into the town; because such a one cannot obtain a sufficient practice in the country against the competition of the shopkeeping practitioner. Such is the preference of the humbler class of patients, the shopkeepers and farmers, who, from their numbers, make the chief source of practice in a country district; they will not consult a physician practising as such so long as they can have a man who only charges for medicines, even though he may charge at such a rate as to make them ultimately pay more than they would have paid to the physician. In consequence of this the larger towns are overstocked with physicians practising as such only, so that a young man, however highly educated, will have no chance of succeeding in practice in such a town till grey hairs are growing; for the humbler class of patients in the large town also prefer the dispensing doctor or general practitioner, and the upper classes prefer the older man, however much he may have failed to keep abreast of the medical science of the day, of which they, the patients, know nothing.

Thus young men of ability are led to spend their early professional years hanging about their hospital and school, doing no practice, but waiting in the metropolis for their seniors to pass away, instead of making sufficient incomes in their younger days in some country town, as they might do under another *regime*, a strictly non-trading system. Thus, also, a man in the metropolis will be so much longer before he earns a sufficiency even there; for the greater number of rivals press him as hardly as they do his country brethren; and the general practitioner, or dispensing medical man who also practises, is an institution in the metropolis as well as in the country; and thus few men are doing anything like good practices in town till they are turned fifty; and some of the highest ability pass away before the public have ever heard of their names.

Hence, also, the dishonest conception entertained by the public as to the non-necessity of remunerating a medical man for his services; and the impossibility of his asking for what is his legal due. If he asks to be paid he loses his practice —a thing which ought not to be possible, simply because there ought not practically to be such an over-abundant supply of medical men for the public to run to, one after the other. In England it is a common practice for well-to-do-patients to run up as long a score as possible with one doctor, and as soon as he asks for payment to go off forthwith to another, on whom the same dishonesty is practised in turn, and so on. Now it is obvious that we shall not be able to say that matters are on a satisfactory footing in the profession until its numbers and competition are so reduced that, instead of men feeling gratified at thus obtaining other men's bad bargains, it shall be an understood thing that each practitioner furnishes his brethren with a list of those who have thus declined to pay, and till such fellow-feeling shall exist among them that all shall unanimously refuse further medical assistance until the first attendant shall have been paid for his services.

It may be said it is good for the public that they should have such a number of men to turn to, in order that great competition may produce a corresponding public advantage. We venture to doubt this. The disadvantages of such competition, even to the public, are greater than the advantages. If a man is grossly incompetent his place will soon be supplied under any system; and we deny that it is any advantage to the patient or the public to have so many men round them that they can turn from one to the other merely from whim, or because the first man expects to be paid for his services. The disadvantages of this to the profession, nay, we would say its ruinous effect on them, must react on the public with very great detriment to their interests. And this habit of not paying, or underpaying, the doctor has gone to a frightful extent. We have known the major of a militia regiment,

a man who prided himself on his belonging to one of the county families, and who had been high sheriff of his county, give a physician the fee of one pound for five visits, during which his child's life had been saved, and which had cost the doctor in actual cash out of pocket, through the loss of other calls, the sum of fifteen shillings; so that for five visits, at a distance of five miles in the country, he pocketed five shillings, or one shilling per visit, supplying medicines also gratis. And this style of payment we have known to be given by more than one person in the same locality, the Bœotia of the country no doubt, where the gentry, though wealthy, are, some of them, mere boors; but even boors ought to learn honesty. We have known, in the same district, a lady of title employ a physician to attend her family, sending for him in much consternation and with great urgency, believing that infectious disease had made its appearance, and, when the attendance was over, bow him out without any fee whatsoever; and never send him any afterwards, as he might suppose she meant to do. But what redress has he? To ask for it would subject him to ridicule on her part; to appeal to a court of law, as things are at present, would drive him out of the county. Nor is this estimate of the value of medical services confined to the country districts, or to the sick public only. The fee allowed to a physician by the legal functionaries for spending his whole day in a court of law, whether at Quarter Sessions or Assizes, is just one guinea. If he lives at such a distance as to preclude his returning the same night, he may claim a second to cover all expenses of hotel charges, &c., except his actual travelling expenditure; but if living in the town, one guinea is the whole sum for the entire day. It signifies nothing what his other practice may be, nor how much he may lose meantime, and we have known a man permanently lose the practice of a family through his being detained at a distance in a court of law.

And this fee of £1 . 1s. is confined to the members of the medical profession. To other professional men, engineers,

clergymen, &c., who have no possible patients or fees awaiting them elsewhere, just double this sum is given, or £2 . 2s. per day, with the guinea as before for their hotel expenses. We had an opportunity a short time ago of verifying this at an Assize court, to our own personal loss; having seen the official schedule prescribing £2 . 2s. for professional witnesses, with a guinea for expenses, and on applying to be paid in accordance with this scale, we were told by the Crown Solicitor that it did not apply to medical men, but only to witnesses belonging to other professions, and that he had no power to give the ordinary professional fee to a physician.

Again, in civil bill cases we have not a chance of being paid, yet we are compelled by law to attend on the summons of any individual for any case, however unimportant; and we have known a leading metropolitan surgeon summoned by telegram to go a distance of over 100 miles, and receive only the conventional fee of one guinea, with his travelling expenses. Not until the public can be taught to form a higher general estimate of the value of our professional services can we expect such treatment of our profession to cease; and this certainly can only be when we shall have so far reduced our own numbers that we shall be able to name our own terms for our services, and insist on their fulfilment, without danger of losing our practice in consequence. At present the legal claim for remuneration for a medical man's services is good only in name, so certain is his loss of practice afterwards; and we could specify a bench of country justices who have even dismissed a doctor's claim, telling him he need not bring his claims before them for the future.

The old hypothesis that the doctor's fee was merely a voluntary offering, and perfectly optional on the part of the patient, has undoubtedly had much to do in bringing about this state of things; nor is it a rule we should have objected to so long as the public regarded the fee as a debt of honour; but if they have forgotten honour in the treatment of the physician, it is high time to make the claim a legal one, as

was done in the Act of 1858. Since that enactment they have shown that they hold honesty no higher than honour in their estimation; it is, therefore, now high time to resort to farther measures to enforce our just rights.

Now not only in the other professions, as we have above remarked, but also, for many years back, in every trade or occupation of civilised life except our own, it has been fully recognised that combination and organisation are the only means by which the employer can be compelled to give a proper price for labour. By a proper price, we mean remuneration proportioned to the value of the services rendered to Society by the whole body of workers in any given employment, the amount to be shared by each individual depending on the farther consideration of the number of individual workers who are to share it, a matter which is always a subject of important consideration and regulation in trade societies; and we may say in passing, that the inevitable operation of the laws of supply and demand, will, in all cases prevent the number of workers being reduced to a point at which Society will begin to suffer from insufficient supply. For the immediate result of such diminution of numbers would be that the public would increase the remuneration for such services, nay, the very fact that there was a smaller number of workmen to divide the public remuneration, would of itself have this effect; then, it is obvious that far from placing any farther limitation on their numbers, every man in the trade would endeavour to get his own son into it rather than devote him to some other more fully stocked employment in which, by hypothesis, a smaller remuneration should be all that he could earn; and this would at once reduce the insufficiency of numbers in the trade.

We may remark, *en passant*, how very few medical men put their sons into their own profession.

Undoubtedly there are two modes of action in all such organisations, and one of these is injurious to both the employer and the public, and not only so, but is unquestion-

ably even more injurious to the interests of the parties who have recourse to it, than it is either to the employer or the public; and in the use of this mode of action consists the offence of most trades-unions against the laws of political economy, and their injury to the public, as well as to themselves did they only know it. This method consists in an arbitrary raising of individual wages on the ground simply that they want more for their work, irrespective of any consideration regarding the value of their work, and therefore, irrespective of the consideration whether the public, who, and not the capitalist, ultimately pay for all, will agree to take work from them at that price. Under such circumstances the employment goes elsewhere, and the country, and, what is more to the present point, the operative also, suffers with the capitalist, and more than he does. A demand similar to this on the part of our profession would be that of the guinea fee, if rigorously enforced, as some persons wish; persons who certainly have not read aright the lessons of political economy.

The simple result of enforcing such a claim would be that the public would not employ us once for every ten times that they would under a more reasonable tariff. They would do without medical advice; they would treat themselves, or go to the druggist or the quack, and these unqualified persons would simply pocket money at our expense. Our object evidently ought to be to keep our hands fully employed, whether at a large fee, if possible, or at a smaller one, if necessary. Twenty patients a day at five shillings would pay a man better than one or two at a guinea, and to give advice to the less wealthy classes at the former fee, would by no means involve the loss of the wealthier at the latter, rather the contrary.

Obviously, therefore, to combine for the purpose of arbitrarily raising our tariff is to work in the wrong direction, even if it were possible; but as matters are at present it is not even possible, for another medical man, in

the present state of the profession, is always ready to step in, if any man raises his charges, or if a number combine to do so. And keenly the operatives of the trades-unions have seen this point, that combination is useless if there is a surplus of labour in the market; they have not seen that combination under such circumstances is injurious to their own interests, as we, with our higher education, and wider grasp of general principles ought to be able to do; but they have seen that it is useless, or at least they have usually appreciated this; and where they have failed even to reach this lower conception of economical law worse results have followed to themselves. And hence they have very commonly resorted to the second, and legitimate, mode of augmenting the remuneration for their labour, namely, by restricting the quantity of labour in the market. This they have accomplished by limiting the number of apprentices in each trade. Wherever this can be done the influence on the rate of wages has been healthy and beneficial. Two classes of labour, in which owing to circumstances it has proved impossible of accomplishment, are sufficient to illustrate the condition to which those engaged in any occupation must necessarily sink, unless some form of barrier can be invented which shall thus limit the number of competitors for wages. One of these is that of the sempstresses, so pathetically delineated by the master-hand of Hood, an occupation necessarily overstocked as being the last resource of honest women unable to do anything else, yet always competent to fulfil this one occupation; the other is that of the agricultural labourer, the similar resource of the other sex when unable to do better, and yet, in reliance on the Poor Law, determinedly multiplying down to the utmost limit of mere subsistence.

Among the professions we believe that our own is unique in having failed to place any limit on its numbers. Something of the kind was accomplished in former days by the system of surgical apprenticeships, and the requisition of University degrees for the membership of the College of

Physicians. But since these requirements have gone out of fashion nothing has as yet taken their place as a restriction on the members of this, a perfectly open profession, and one which, being from its peculiar circumstances capable of being turned into a trade, offers peculiar inducements to young men of the humbler and less educated classes, as enabling them to climb to higher personal position by its means, while yet securing the average profits of a small shopkeeper, at whatever cost to the respectability of the profession at large, and of its higher members.

It seems strange that such frequent re-iteration of this point should be necessary before it can find acceptance with those who guard the various portals of the profession. We would once again commend it earnestly to their notice. All writers on political economy enforce the view that the degree to which wages are lowered by the presence of an excess of labour in the market, is wholly out of proportion to the amount by which each man would have his receipts lowered if the labour which is in excess were to be paid out of the former gross wages of the trade, without introducing competition and thereby lowering this gross sum. That is to say if x labourers can supply the requirements of the public, while there are $x+a$ offering their services in competition with each other, the rate of wages will, by this competition, be so much reduced that the total earnings of $x+a$ will be less than if there had been only x labourers to compete; much more will the earnings of each individual be lower when the larger number compete. Indeed under such circumstances it would actually pay the particular class of labour better if the legitimate number of labourers, x, were to club together to pay the extra number, a, their average earnings, as reduced by such competition, on condition of their ceasing from competing with them in the labour market. We say the net earnings of each individual in the class x would be more after this deduction than it would be if $x+a$ labourers were to continue to compete; and the amount by

which they would be more would vary directly with the number of extra labourers, a. It may not perhaps be always easy to say what the number x will be in any given class of labour; how many labourers belonging to any craft or occupation can supply the requirements of the public; it is of course evident that if the number be made too small there is loss and injury not only to the public, but even to the class of labour in question taken in the whole as a class. But in the case of our profession a calculation might be made to show the very great excess of numbers that exists, and that might be removed without perhaps even approximating to the number which we have designated as x, the number just able fairly to supply the need of the public and no more. Suppose we take the profession in Ireland as an illustration of our method of calculation. The number of medical men in Ireland of known address, according to Churchill's Directory for 1872, appears to be about 2,150. Now without depriving any country village or district of its present medical man, where there is only one, and confining our attention to villages or towns where there are two or more, and allowing these latter places one medical man where the population of the town is under 1,000, two if over 1,000 and under 2,000, three if over 2,000 and under 3,000, and so on, we find that over and above this very liberal allowance or proportion, there are no fewer than 500 medical men in such towns; and that these 500, or 24 per cent of the whole, are really unnecessary in these places for the service of the public, we may with certainty infer from the fact that in one or two towns, where the profession has been favoured by circumstances, the proportion is very much below this, yet the public suffer no inconvenience, for if they did they would immediately find another medical man out of the many supernumeraries elsewhere to supply their requirements. Thus the flourishing town of Newtownards, in the wealthy county of Down, with a population of 9,000 is returned as having but three medical men; but this is the only instance we

have of such an unprecedented proportion in favour of the profession. Very numerous, on the other hand, are the cases of villages under 1,000 inhabitants, or even under 500, where there are two, or in some cases three medical men. Nay, there are two villages of under 1,000 inhabitants which have four doctors, and a third with a population of under 500 has as many, two of them Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland; and the pretty little village of Moneymore, on the Drapers' Company's estate in the county of Londonderry, with a population of 729, rejoices in the services of five medical men. We doubt if their experience of the place is likely to correspond with its well-omened name.

As we have sometimes found persons unable to appreciate the above argument, in consequence of their perceptions being confused by a consideration of the district surrounding the town, we may re-state the argument in the following form:—If we find that a town like Newtownards, with 9,000 inhabitants, and a populous country round it, with, as it appears, about 7,000 inhabitants more in its dispensary district, selecting the dispensary district as the unit of subdivision, in order to keep effectually clear of any district claiming the services of another medical man, if, then, three doctors can supply the wants of the public in this district of 16,000 inhabitants, it is fair to argue that a town of 3,000 inhabitants, with an additional population of, say, 6,000 more in its surrounding district, will be a little overstocked with four doctors; yet this is the number our above estimate would allow it. What should we say, then, to a town of 2,000, with a district of 5,000, and five or six doctors. In fact, since we may say that the size of the town is a measure of the wealth of its district, the poor being attended by the dispensary doctor, we assert that in allowing a certain number of doctors to a district, in proportion to the number of inhabitants of the town or village belonging to it, we do, in fact, include the requirements of the district in our calculation. And thus, on the liberal calculation of one

medical man for every 1,000 and fraction of 1,000 in the population of each town that has more than one, and retaining the doctor in all cases of either town or country where there is only one, we arrive at the startling fact that 500 medical men, or 24 per cent. of the whole number of the profession might be removed from the country without any loss or injury to the public—nay, we might say, if it were the least competent that were removed, with very material benefit to the public, owing to the replacement of less skilled service by more skilled.

Now, it is precisely this supernumary 24 per cent. that makes the profession be estimated as it is at present. It is precisely to their presence that it is due that the public can treat us as they please, can pay us fees or not as they choose, can send for us any distance, or require from us any length of attendance, and then pay us at their own tariff, amounting to, it may be, a shilling a visit net, or, it may be, not pay us at all. They know that we dare not claim what is, according to honour, honesty, and law, our own; to do so would bring down the wrath of the whole district upon us, for the whole district is interested in keeping down the doctor's charges, and would instantly call in some one or other of the many medical men who are always too readily forthcoming. Again, let us consider the case of public appointments, in which a man is required to give service alike by day and night, week days and Sundays—service laborious, anxious, incessant, and thankless—in attending, under the Medical Charities Acts, districts containing 50, 80, 100, 150, aye, over 200 square miles, or, it may be, a population numbering 10,000, 15,000, 20,000, or even 25,000 persons, at salaries varying from 7s. a day in some few exceptional cases, downwards, according to size of district or number of population, to less than 2s. 9d. a day, which is the scandalous sum paid by the Templeudigan Dispensary Committee, in the County Wexford, to their medical officer, for attending a district of twenty-seven square miles, with a population of nearly 4,000

persons, the expense of a horse and man being also necessarily incurred by the doctor. Let us remember that some of the artisan classes now receive much higher wages than this, carpenters, for instance, now requiring in England 6s. 9d. wages for a day of nine hours, without the educational qualifications of a doctor, nor yet having to maintain the position of a gentleman; nor, further, having to undergo any anxiety, or undertake any responsibility at all comparable with his. Let us remember also that so indiscriminate is the character of Poor Law medical relief that practice is almost abolished, as every one can obtain a ticket if he only asks for it.

Yet, when one of these appointments falls vacant what happens? A rush is made from all quarters, as if to a newly discovered Australian gold reef. In the hope of making something by the sale of medicines in an unoccupied district, men, mostly young men, flock in from towns like those we have spoken of above, where there are two or three doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. Active canvassing goes on, for is not 4s. 6d. a day with a shop better than the shop without the 4s. 6d., even though severe labour has to be incurred, and the expense of a horse and man has to come out of the 4s. 6d. Of course, the committee conclude, that as there are so many applicants, they have offered ample remuneration. If an increase of salary is afterwards asked for by the successful candidate they oppose it, on the grounds that they can get plenty of eager applicants at the same salary, so the doctor can go if he is dissatisfied. Of course years' experience, ability, and high qualifications go for nothing with a committee of clodhoppers; they are no judges of such matters; any new man will do quite as well as the old; it is only the paupers who will suffer in consequence of any change. When the appointment vacant has been filled the disappointed candidates rush off to the next vacancy, and their appearance there produces, of course, the same conviction on the minds of the committee, that the salary offered,

no matter how small, is ample when it is only a doctor that is to be paid.

Now, is it not evident that if only ten men, on an average, were removed in each county, this rush of candidates for appointments such as these would be effectually stopped. What would then be the result? A committee would advertise an appointment at, say, £80 a year. A day would be named for sending in applications to the secretary, but not a single application arrives for the post. The day of election comes; the committee meet. "Well, Mr. Secretary, where are your applications? Call up the candidates." What, no appearance! A stare of dismay and astonishment goes round the members. Can it really be? What is to be done? All kinds of expedients are suggested; at last some farmer less heavy-headed than the rest, in the habit, it may be, of attracting labour at harvest time by the offer of higher wages than his neighbours, suggests the idea of offering £100 a year, instead of £80, for the services of a doctor. After much discussion it is agreed to, and a new day appointed for the selection. Again the same result. The offer of £125 is now tried, and on the appointed day a young man who has passed since the last day of meeting comes forward, and says that he is willing to try the place for a little till he can get something better, which, under this new *regime*, he shortly succeeds in doing; and ere long the sum of £150 or £200 a year has to be offered to induce a man to stay in any dispensary, for be it remembered that the committees will then be reduced to bidding against each other for the services of medical men, and the bargain will be one of fair contract for salary, in proportion to the work to be done, and the education and skill required for the performance of it, rather than the undertaking of a starving man begging for bread.

So also in the public services. Contrast the condition of things as they now are with what would then be the case. In the Army Medical Service the senior assistant-surgeons

have at present entered on their sixteenth year of service; only nine promotions to the rank of surgeon had been made during the year 1872, up to September 1st; and at that date twenty-six assistant-surgeons remained who had joined in the year 1857, and ninety-seven who had joined in the year 1858. So that it is evident that many of the latter will have to complete twenty years' service in the rank of assistant-surgeon, with service in all parts of the world, at a maximum pay of £320 a year, subject to enormous deductions for mess and band expenses, without option, and heavy expenses in change of quarters, loss on furniture, moving his family, &c. —for at the age of forty to forty-five years a man expects to have a family, if ever he is to have one; and in addition to all these compulsory expenses there are heavy regimental demands, which although not nominally compulsory, are yet enforced by a moral compulsion which it is impossible to resist. Is it any wonder that the Army Medical Service is year by year becoming more unpopular, and is failing to attract the best candidates to its ranks?

It is every year beginning to be more and more clearly understood that a sick army is an inefficient one, that sickness carries off far more men in a campaign than the bullet or the bayonet, in addition to its ravages in time of peace, and that therefore highly-skilled medical officers are no less essential to the success of a campaign than are the combatant officers. Then why is not every effort made to attract the best men to these posts, for it is very well known that the highest class even of those who contemplate the public service decline the army; whereas it is clear that for all the public services the very best men that can be obtained ought to be secured? In the combatant ranks it has been found that the scientific branches of the service must have special promotion given to them to attract men of ability to these important departments, and make their posts worth their keeping; and our department, though non-combatant, is one of the most strictly scientific of the service.

And after the reduction in our numbers which we have proposed, with its consequent improvement in the returns to be derived from civil practice, as soon as it should be found, as it would be found, that not a single candidate replied to the invitation from the War Office to compete for the Army Medical Service, the heads of the department would begin to consider what should be done. A new warrant would come out, perhaps offering advantages which would surpass even those offered by the revoked warrant of 1858. Promotion to the rank of surgeon would be given after ten years' service, pay would be increased, rank and privileges conceded; some system of retirement would be devised, sufficiently attractive to ensure more rapid promotion to the administrative ranks, say retirement on £1 a day after twenty years' service. Honours, now awarded with so niggard a hand, would be dealt out more freely, so as to bear a fairer comparison with those given in the combatant branches of the service; and, generally, this, a scientific branch, would at last be recognised as being fully on an equality with the combatant branches. Corresponding advantages would of course make themselves equally manifest in the Naval Medical Service, since a common cause would operate on both.

Similarly, our fees would then rise, and our remuneration improve, from the paying public also, for the doctor would no longer be afraid to ask for what he had lawfully and hardly earned. We should not then have districts in Scotland where 6d. charges should be known, or even 1s. charges, as we have ourselves known to be the case in an English town of 50,000 inhabitants. We should not have anywhere such a scale of fees as that referred to in the *Medical Press and Circular* of September 11, 1872, p. 216, as being adopted by a practitioner of thirty years' experience—viz., "midwifery, 2s. 6d.; advice, 6d.; consultations, 1s.; other charges proportionately moderate." Nor should we have (*Med. Press and Circ., loc. cit.*) "a radius of practice of from fifteen to twenty miles, necessitating daily and nightly

work, that does not afford a remuneration that will justify taxation; in other words, less than £100 per annum."

We might hope also that ere long the public would begin to be on the doctor's side in the matter of enforcing payment, feeling that if one person cheated him he might be considered as leaving the rest of the public to pay his debts by means of increased charges, and with this change the profession and individual alike would rise immensely in the public estimation. Moreover, the shops would then be handed over to their legitimate occupants, the chemists and druggists; for what medical man would keep a shop, or even supply medicine, if he were fairly occupied in visiting and consulting, and could intrust his compounding to any person else competent to do it, and yet not a rival in practice? And this would be at once better and cheaper for the public, for political economy teaches us that at once the best and the cheapest labour is always to be obtained by a division of labour where this is practicable. Hence from another point of view the profession and the individual alike would rise in the public estimation; the character and position of a retail trader would be forgotten, and that of a professional gentleman would be strictly maintained. Need we say that a more respectable, more able, and more highly educated class of men would thereby be attracted to the profession; from whence, again, a third step would be gained in the estimate formed by the public of the profession? Does any person say that this is an ideal state of things, wholly incapable of being practically realised? We reply that, so far from this being the case, had the various Colleges and licensing Institutions taken care that the members of the profession in Ireland should have decreased at the rate of fifty per annum for the last ten years, a corresponding reduction in England and Scotland being obtained, through the co-operation of the Corporations in those countries, so as to prevent emigration, this state of things would at this moment have been actually in existence. What! that we should have been in the

receipt of £200 a year for our dispensaries? We reply, Yes! Our numbers would have been reduced by 500, or from 2,150 to 1,650, and we could have commanded our own terms with the dispensary Committees, and should, moreover, have been much better paid by our private patients. And since the number of persons entering the profession annually in Ireland is about 150, this would only imply rejecting, say at the preliminary examination, one out of every three now passed. The preliminary examination would be the best one to draw the strings tighter at, since it would allow the candidate to select some other walk in life before he should have spent three or four years in a vain endeavour to master the profession of medicine.

But such rejections would involve serious loss to the Colleges, who would thus be asked to forego their own advantage for the sake of the profession.

Let us then inquire whether it would not be worth while to the profession, taken in a body, to reimburse the colleges for the loss which must be sustained by this increased stringency in examination, provided some feasible mode of effecting such reimbursement could be devised. The loss to the Colleges, at an average of £20 fees for each candidate, would have been about £10,000 in the ten years, or about £1,000 per annum. The gain to each member of the profession in Ireland could hardly be estimated at less than £100 a year; to the Poor Law Officers in actual increase of salary; to the rest in enhanced fees and more employment. It must be remembered that the entire former earnings of the suppressed 500 would now go into the pockets of the remainder; and if we estimated these at £200 a year each, it would amount to the sum of £100,000 per annum, which, distributed over the remaining number of 1,650, or thereabouts, would of itself amount to £60 a year to each. We think, therefore, that when we fix £100 a year as the resulting increase of income to each member of the profession, we take a very low estimate. Supposing, then, the

number reduced to 1,650, or even to 1,500, a contribution of only £1 per annum from only two-thirds of the number, or one per cent. of their increased earnings from each, would reimburse the Colleges for their self-denial for the sake of the profession. Indeed, it is clear, from the above calculation, that it would be well worth while to the profession to make the Colleges altogether independent of licensing fees.

As matters are at present it would not perhaps be too much to say, that for every guinea pocketed by the Colleges by passing candidates whom they would not have passed but for the competition with each other for fees, it may be estimated that the Council and examiners of each College, taken as a body collectively, will actually have subscribed the guinea personally for the College out of their own private resources; so clearly does the over-stocking of the profession tell against the emoluments of even its highest members; so certainly would even the consulting physician and surgeon of the metropolis find their emoluments increase by a limitation of the excessive numbers that are every year passing into the profession across the too lax and too low barriers.

We know that it is necessarily useless to press a point like this upon any one College while the rest hold back. We know that the candidates rejected by any one College would forthwith, in these days of easy locomotion, betake themselves to another, unless the same influences could be brought to bear to narrow all the portals, and raise all the barriers alike.

But we do not despair of seeing some agreement come to among all the Colleges for this purpose as soon as it is fairly brought home to the examiners in all that they may be regarded as personally contributing to the funds of their respective Colleges the difference between the fees of the candidates who now actually do pass and those who would pass under a more rigid system; and when, moreover, the Colleges and the profession at large shall agree to adopt some method of reimbursing the former for the loss of fees which

would inevitably result from greater strictness. It will, doubtless, be said that such a proposal is not capable of practical realisation. But with this view we venture to disagree, and shall proceed to consider some ideas tending towards its realisation.

We have said that one of the leading political ideas of the day is that of national self-government. The time was when the King was the nation. Having won his power by the sword, he continued to enforce his will by the same weapon, aided, when he thought it advisable, by the axe. We have changed all that. The King found that the people could use the sword as well as he; the axe also proved an unreliable weapon; it could cut both ways; the rope was then tried; but Judge Jefferies drew it a little too tight, and it snapped. The Sovereign nó longer governs the nation; we govern ourselves now; we are no longer children; we can walk without leading-strings. This view permeates all society and all social organisations. The Sovereign in the old days chartered and endowed, of his or her own sovereign pleasure, free grace, and mere motion, certain Colleges and educational Institutions for the teaching of medicine and surgery; and a noble idea it was in the old days; but it cannot be denied that *pari passu* with the political status of the people sketched above some corresponding changes might with great advantage be made in these Institutions. For in these days the Parliament decides what is of most advantage to the nation, and the Government, representing the old Sovereign will in its executive functions, but now appointed by the Parliamentary will, only carries out its behests. And the Parliament itself is but the representative of the nation; and every now and then the franchise is extended lower and lower, as the humbler classes rise to the political stature of men, and become, by their education and intelligence, fit to take their share in the government of the nation. An oligarchy is an anachronism, a thing of the past. All government must now be representative, and representative

of the whole of those governed, of all the interests involved by such government. Even in the Church, formerly the most autocratic, and afterwards the most oligarchical of all organisations, this principle is now beginning to be recognised; and we have witnessed the spectacle not only of the minor clergy, but even of the laity, taking part in the government of the body of which they form a part. Surely, it is time for our profession, the leading profession as regards freedom of thought and liberality of political ideas, the leading profession as regards intellectual grasp and breadth of view, to put itself in this respect in harmony with this great political idea of the present day; to make its corporate Institutions no longer an embodiment of the oligarchy of the profession, but bodies representing the entire profession on the broadest democratical basis; in one word, to lower their franchise, and make the representative principle in its strictest sense the basis of their corporate existence.

We think that in this idea we find a solution of the difficult question of pecuniary compensation to the Colleges for greater strictness of examination alluded to above. For if, on the one hand, the profession obtain the power to enforce a limitation of the number of entrants within its portals, and thus to reduce the number of rival competitors for the employment of the public, as it assuredly will do as soon as it shall have acquired the power of so doing, on the other hand, it is but fair that each man should obtain the power of thus influencing corporate or Collegiate legislation on professional matters by a franchise tax payable to his Corporation. It is a recognised principle of self-government that taxation is to be conterminous with representation, and representation with taxation; that only those who contribute to the national or local funds shall have any right to have a voice in the disposal of such funds. Suppose, now, that we take the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, one of the most liberal and progressive of the Corporations, as an illustration, and suggest a definite scheme to carry out our present proposal.

The income of the College from fees for examinations for letters testimonial only, omitting fees for fellowships and midwifery licences, amounts to about £2,500 per annum; the number of licentiates on the lists amounts to about 2,000; but, as many of these are abroad, we may estimate the number within the three kingdoms at, perhaps, about 1,500.

Now, we propose that to each of these the College should offer its franchise; that is to say, the right of voting for the election of officers and Council, and, generally, of exercising all rights and privileges now exercised by the fellows, save only that they should not be themselves eligible to fill offices, or have seats on the Council, these being reserved for the fellows, as at present. We propose also, as an essential condition of rendering such franchise substantial and *bonâ fide*, and not merely nominal and illusory, that such votes may be given in writing, or on a printed form, and transmitted through the post office (the voter's signature being duly witnessed if thought necessary, but this is a matter of detail), thus obviating the necessity of personal attendance for the purpose of voting; and, finally, we propose that, for the purpose of exercising such privileges, a list of the constituency should be kept at the college, on which every licentiate should have the right of enrolling his name, in consideration of his paying to the funds of the College the sum of one guinea per annum. We believe that on such a list nearly every licentiate would enrol his name. The term of Member might be applied to such, and we believe that the honour, as well as the pecuniary advantage, as we argue, of having a voice in the affairs of his College, and the fact of his not being considered to be in full membership till he should have done so, would be sufficient to attract nearly all. And as soon as it should be clearly understood by the members of the profession that through this agency a limit could be put to the numbers of their professional rivals, that, in fact, a barrier would be erected against unwarranted intruders, and its defence entrusted to their hands, then,

indeed, we might expect that every licentiate's first act on passing would be to enrol his name in this self-protective professional association. If any such limitation of candidates for entrance into the profession can thus be effected, the medical officers of the Army and Navy will be among the first, as we have above shewn, to feel the benefit of it. It is, therefore, only reasonable to expect that they should join their brethren in civil life in supporting any such scheme of compensation to the licensing Bodies and medical schools as that here proposed. Suppose, then, that for the present, on these terms, 1,200 members should enrol their names, this would amount to the sum of £1,200 a-year, the sole object of which fund should be to constitute a guarantee fund for this purpose, that in so far as strictness of examination should cause a loss to the funds of the College, so far should this fund be drawn on to replace the deficiency, up to some sum to be previously agreed on, say, something over the present average receipts of the College for Letters Testimonial, or perhaps about £2,500 a year. Any surplus might be devoted first of all to compensating the medical schools for any loss which they might have sustained owing to diminished number of pupils, in consequence of greater strictness at the preliminary examination, where, as we have said above, the principal part of the strain ought, for the candidates' sake, to be applied. Yet, since the profits of each member of the profession would by these measures be much increased, there can be no doubt that there would be little difficulty experienced in so raising the students' school and hospital fees as to compensate for the decrease in numbers, since it would be worth while to pay an increased premium for admission to a profession which should have become more remunerative in its returns. Any further surplus might be devoted to some purpose connected with the profession, to be decided by the Council of the College—say, to the Medical Benevolent Fund, or to scholarships and studentships at the universities, or medical schools, for the

sons of members of the profession, or for scientifie researches in a medical direction, similar to those to which the British Association and Royal Society devote their surplus funds. But the rule should be rigid, that in such surplus the licensing Body should have no interest, lest a temptation might again arise to make it as large as possible by admitting candidates who might fairly be rejected, and thus drawing as little as possible on the guarantee fund. It will be asked what inducement would men then have to take the fellowship? We reply, the greater honour and higher status, together with the reservation of seats on the Council, and the higher offices, for fellows only, and these inducements, we believe, would be found quite sufficient, being, indeed, the really operative motives even at present. But we propose, a little further on, to consider the fellowship also, with a view of ascertaining whether it might not be made much more attractive than at present by an increased consideration and honour being added to it, with perhaps even a corresponding source of emolument.

It is obvious that under such a representative constitution, with an electoral franchise extended to all licentiates, a candidate for a seat on the Council would be under the necessity of making a declaration regarding his professional politics similar to that made by a candidate for parliamentary honours; and it is equally obvious that no gentleman would have a chance of obtaining a seat who should not pledge himself to limit the numbers of the profession by the strictest possible tests; nor would he have a chance of re-election the next year should he fail to carry out his pledges. And to this end the discussions at Council meetings ought to be open to the profession, and duly reported in the professional journals. Thus only can public opinion be brought to bear on a representative assembly, and if it is not brought to bear the assembly is representative only in name.

Were such a scheme as is above proposed once adopted by

a leading licensing Body, like the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, there can be little doubt but that all the other licensing Corporations would quickly follow suit. It would, indeed, be not only for their corporate interest and the higher estimation of their licences, but also for the private pecuniary interest of the individual members of their Councils and Senates so to do. But yet one great advantage of this scheme would be that it could be adopted by each College independently; none need wait on the rest; the agreement once entered into between a Corporation and its licentiates it would be independent of the rivalry of other licensing Bodies; its rejected candidates might flock elsewhere if they pleased, and pass elsewhere if their examiners pleased, but this would have no effect upon the College funds. It would, indeed, prevent the full benefit of the innovation being at once realised by the profession, but we believe that once the example should be set the popular professional voice would force the change of system on the most reluctant and conservative institution within a very short space of time. And we may remark, *en passant*, that the value of the licence of the Corporations which should adopt such a system would obviously rise much in the public estimation *pari passu* with the increased stringency these Corporations should be known to have begun to exercise in their examinations when their licentiates should have guaranteed them against consequent loss.

It will be said, "This limiting of our numbers is trades-unionism pure and simple." It is. And nothing but trades-unionism will do in these days. Nothing else will put us before the public in the position of parties to a contract for our services, instead of suppliants for employment at any terms. But it is trades-unionism only in its legitimate features, now recognised as such by every thinking mind. It is, indeed, trades-unionism only in the single feature of limiting the supply of professional labour, and by no means even suggests the most usual feature of trade combinations

among the artisan class, that of a strike for higher wages. Such raising of professional emoluments it leaves to the natural operation of the laws of supply and demand. To strike, in its usual sense—namely, that all should refuse to work at once, by pre-concerted arrangement, would be, on the part of our profession, an abnegation of its most solemn responsibilities and obligations; nor do we believe that any medical man could enter into so unholy a combination. To do so indeed would be not only a crime, but also a mistake, and one which the public would find means to make re-act with ten-fold disaster on our own heads. But so far from contemplating anything which should act injuriously on the public interest, the limitation of our numbers by the enforcement of more thorough education, and the institution of severer tests, would only operate for their welfare.

But though thus protesting against a strike on the part of our profession in the sense in which the term is understood by the artisan classes, yet we by no means intend to protest against any arrangement or agreement to be made by the practitioners of any town or district as to the fees they will charge, whether for private or club attendance. We do, indeed, insist on the utter futility of any such arrangement as the profession stands at present; for even if the strictest arrangement were made, some new comer would immediately be attracted to the district included in the arrangement, who would forthwith under-sell his brethren, and draw all their patients from them. "What," it will be said; "notwithstanding any superiority of skill on their part?" Yes, we reply, the public know nothing about medical skill or science, how could they? One doctor is as good as another in their eyes, until some chance hit or fortuitous circumstance, it may be age, religion, party spirit, anything but skill, gives one man a reputation, and then there is an unbounded belief in him; while another man, it may be of far superior science and skill, may be as unreasonably blamed and depreciated for the loss of some case which may have

been absolutely taken out of his hands by some senior or more trusted consultant, as we have known to be the case, and then every person condemns him.

We speak not now of those who win the confidence of their professional brethren by their science and mastery of their profession, and who thus rise to distinction by the legitimate path; we speak only of those who rise to a practice by fawning upon and toadying the public, a course which, if pursued with sufficient zeal, and withal a sufficient amount of brazen-faced self-confidence and assurance, will work into practice the veriest quack and most ignorant impostor. How else, indeed, does the unqualified charlatan work himself into the large practice that so invariably attends his exertions? In the face of such considerations as these we most earnestly warn our professional brethren that, with the profession overstocked, as it is at present, no combination to raise the tariff of fees will have any other effect than that of introducing new comers to a town or district, and putting the practice into their hands, or that of some unlicensed quack.

But, secondly, suppose the profession reduced in numbers to the extent that we have proposed, will that afford us any ground for very materially raising our tariff of fees? We think not; at least, not in any locality where they are already fixed at any reasonable amount. In some places, no doubt, a medical man might safely raise his fees very considerably without overcharging the public, were he only relieved from competition, or the fear of it; as, for instance, in that abode of the blest in Ayrshire above alluded to, where 6d. is the charge for advice, and 2s. 6d. for midwifery. But in all places where the charges for advice are something that a poor man can pay, and that a decent man with a little self-respect will pay sooner than become chargeable on the poor rates, in all such places we would say to our brethren, let the profession be reduced in numbers as it may, do not raise your fees to an exorbitant charge, merely because some

will pay them when they cannot help consulting you. Let the poor man have your advice for what he can afford to give for it, and get as much as you can from the rich.

For even from a selfish point of view, our interest decidedly is not so much to insist on the guinea fee, except from the wealthy, as to have our time fully occupied by those who will pay something, more or less, according to their circumstances; and, for our part, we should much prefer to have eight or ten patients daily at 5s., rather than to receive our guinea fee once or twice in the week, and, we think, so would most others. Now, let us remember that if we raise our tariff unreasonably, we reduce the number of our consultants in a still greater proportion. It is not that they will consult anybody else, for by hypothesis we are speaking of the profession as it ought to be, not as it is, and we may suppose that we are speaking of a town of 2,000 inhabitants and but one medical man; but yet, even in such circumstances, if the guinea fee were insisted on people would go without medical advice except in the most urgent cases. The question in this case is not whether there is another medical man in the place or no, but whether it is worth while, or whether one can afford, to pay more than so much to have advice on such and such a case or ailment. This is the point that the artisan classes, in their numerous strikes, fail to see, that their contest is not with the capitalist, but with the consumer; that the public will not pay more than a certain amount for the production of any article; that they will import it from places where it can be cheaply produced, or, failing that, will cease to use it; and, undoubtedly, in the case of our profession the same result would follow were we to raise our scale of fees too high. The foreign practitioner or the unlicensed quack would step in and swallow up our profits, or, failing their appearance on the scene, people would send for us only in the most urgent cases, to the great reduction of our emoluments. We think that, this point being once clearly seen, we might safely trust the natural

instinct of every man to increase his emoluments for insuring that his services will be given to the public precisely at that tariff, in each individual case, which will strike the exact balance between his capacity for labour and his emoluments, raising the latter as far as the former will permit, of course by reducing his fees till his time is fully occupied, and, on the other hand, raising his fees as his reputation extends, even though he thereby necessarily reduces the number of his patients. If, say in a large town, a man begins practice at a 5s. fee, but after a time finds his reputation rising so that his time is not only fully occupied at this, but that he can hardly get through the amount of work which the demand for his services imposes on him, let him by all means raise his fee to 10s.; he will have somewhat more leisure, and probably a larger income also. If his reputation still continue to rise, let him make his fee £1, or anything higher that he can get. Surely, this would be a more satisfactory mode of reaching a first-class practice than that of waiting for 20 years at the guinea fee, till a man's seniors die off, or perhaps trying to make a name by giving gratis advice to those who ought to pay a small sum, say 5s., and who would willingly do so, but who are unable to pay the conventional guinea fee. It will be clear that it is only for the humbler classes that we propose this accommodation of our charges to their means; the gentry and wealthy merchants, or large farmers, ought still to pay the usual fee; and we believe that if the custom so to do were to obtain in England, as it has long done in Ireland, the medical attendant would be regarded more as the equal of the gentry in the former country, as he is, at least when a physician, and practising only as such, in the latter; certainly, he would not be regarded as being inferior to the other professional classes, as he now too often is. If the country practitioner made his £1,000 or £2,000 a year in fees, large and small, apart from drugs, which, under the conditions we aim at, he would delegate to the druggist, his superior scientific knowledge would very soon

place him quite on a par with the classically educated clergyman in the estimation of the world. Nay, more, the importance of his functions, public as well as private, would every day be more and more recognised, while higher emoluments and a more satisfactory position would attract University men to the profession in England in something approaching to the proportion now found in Ireland, the proportion of graduates in Arts in the profession in the latter country being 29 per cent. in the metropolis, and over 10 per cent. in the provinces, while the English graduates in Arts number only $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in London, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the provinces. To these may be added about 1 per cent. of graduates in Arts from Irish and Scotch Universities, who, having left their own countries to settle in England, increase its per centage by that amount, but who have reduced the Irish per centage, in consequence, by more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Should the proportion in England be brought more nearly into accord with that obtaining in Ireland undoubtedly a great improvement would result in the social status of the profession in that country, and the consideration accorded to them.

But, as we have said, drugs must be relegated to the druggist. We believe that this would be even cheaper for the public, for competition here, as elsewhere, would keep down the druggist's profits to a minimum. Or should the public complain, as they have done ere now, that the druggist charges for Aq. font. at the same rate as for the other ingredients of the mixture, and should the doctor accordingly be still compelled to supply his own patients with medicines, at least let it be without charge, that is to say, without charge as for medicines. Let the fee for each visit, whether of the doctor to the patient's house, or of the patient to the doctor's house, be raised a little if the public will bear it, but let it be fixed; not the same for all classes, for this is what we give our voice against, but fixed for each class, with a due regard to the average power to pay of that class, and irres-

pective of the question whether medicine is supplied or no, and also of the shape, whether mixture, pill, or powder, in which it is supplied. In fact, let the charge be made for time and skill, and never, under any circumstances, for medicine.

Nothing, we think, would more rapidly tend to do away with the drug-selling practitioner, at least in the metropolitan cities, than such a facility as we have above spoken of, that, namely, of obtaining the advice of a young hospital physician or surgeon for a small fixed fee, to be increased in subsequent years as fame accrues and practice improves. And, further, we believe that this would also very materially tend to put a stop to another abuse which has in London reached a frightful height—namely, that abuse of the out-patient department of the large hospitals, which consists in giving admission to all gratis, irrespective of any inquiry or guarantee as to their circumstances being such as to entitle them to charitable relief. Owing to this negligence we have heard of the most scandalous instances of persons of ample means, but wholly lost to all sense of shame or self-respect, imposing themselves on these charitable endowments for advice gratis, persons well able to pay not merely the small fee we speak of to a junior practitioner, but the full guinea fee for advice, and anything usually charged for an operation; we have heard of persons in receipt of thousands per annum driving almost to the hospital in their carriages, but in shabby costume, and there presenting themselves as fit objects for the charity of the institution and the gratis advice of the attending physician and surgeon. Surely it is time that this abuse should be stopped, and that all patients presenting themselves at a hospital for advice should be required to bring a letter of recommendation from their clergyman, their former medical attendant, who, we think, would be tolerably strict about the matter, or from a magistrate or a governor, stating that in consequence of poverty they were unable to pay any fee whatsoever for medical advice.

After having written this portion of our MS. we read an article and a couple of letters in the *Times*, which appear so appropriate to this part of our subject that we here subjoin them:—

"THE TIMES," MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 1873.

From time to time we are obliged to give admission to a topic which presents a melancholy contrast to the appeals more customary at the season we have just passed through. If we have sometimes to stir up the public benevolence, and to point out new objects for it, it is not less our duty to save it, so far as we can, from misdirection and waste. If we fail of that duty, we are sure to be reminded of it by correspondents viewing the matter from another point of view. We have lately been assured by competent authorities—who do but repeat a very old story, to be found in Parliamentary reports forty years old—that our magnificent hospitals, with their first-rate medical staff and the best drugs in the world, all the work of private benevolence, are plundered—for there is no other word—by crowds who have no just claim, and who often more or less waste the precious medicine skilfully and carefully prescribed and made up for them. At our Hospitals and Free Dispensaries an indiscriminate mass of suffering, real or affected, waits for the two or three minutes which are often all that can be given to each case, severely trying the attention of the medical officers, and preventing any personal inquiry or selection. In a vast number of cases suspicion presents itself, but to no possible purpose. It is all but certain that the persons are not proper objects of public charity, and that they can well afford to pay for their own cure. There is room even for suspecting that they come in disguise, and there are current anecdotes to this effect which are only too like truth. Perhaps a larger portion of the waste is owing to an unfortunate appetite for medicine, and a morbid longing for remedy after remedy, one upon another, belonging to wholly different kinds of treatment.

There are stories of women going at the same time to half a dozen dispensaries and gratuitous advisers, and if not actually swallowing everything prescribed, at least tasting one after another, in quest of the elixir which is to reveal itself to the palate as the source of a new life. Such stories, it may be said, have an apocryphal look; but there is an evidence that meets the eye everywhere, and seems to bear them out. Nothing is more common than to find in the houses of the lower middle class downwards rows of medicine bottles, which one might suppose to be the monuments of long past battles with the ills that life is heir to, but which you discover to be recent trophies, if not in present and simultaneous use. So long is the row deployed on the mantelpiece, the shelf, or the window-seat, that one can only conceive a larger appreciation of that physical humanity which can survive such trials. The King of Pontus himself might have shuddered at the multiplicity and variety of the drugs which a not very strong-looking woman will swallow in rapid succession, or administer indiscriminately to her healthy and innocent children. When people do this at their own expense, though the folly be lamentable and the hard-working husband much to be pitied, there is an end to it when the money is gone. Nor is a diet from the varied resources of the *Pharmacopœia* much more injurious to body or mind than one based chiefly on intoxicating liquors. But it is most lamentable that public charity should be preyed on for the indulgence of a morbid craving. Of course it is also lamentable, because it is downright robbery, that the waiting-room of the Free Dispensary should be crowded by persons in receipt of good wages, and even incomes.

But what is to be done? There is the question, which we are willing to believe is not quite impossible of solution. On the one hand there are those who will assume the honesty of the out-patient, the reality of his sufferings, and his inability to obtain relief in any other way; and there are those who tell us to take nothing on trust, but to insist upon proof. The

medical officer of one well-known metropolitan hospital lately went so far as to recognise the fact that many of the out-patients are suffering no other ailment than scanty or innutritious food and great hardship, and, therefore, suggested a practice already combined with his own hospital, of course under a separate management. It is often evident that the best medicine for daily use would be a good dinner, and, accordingly, instead of a prescription addressed to a druggist or the hospital dispenser, the sufferer is sent to a kitchen, and set down to a wholesome meal. Nobody can doubt that this is the best treatment for a large class of complaints the poor are liable to. In the "poor," too, may be included the classes struggling out of poverty, and battling with many difficulties; not the least of them the burden of vicious or drunken husbands, sons, or other relatives. The people cannot choose their employments, sometimes not even their habitations. Possibly if those who cannot be comfortable at home, and do not know what it is to have a properly cooked dinner or supper, could have their meals together without the sacrifice of moral considerations or the destruction of home feelings, they would at least have more chance of health and strength. But we are sorry to confess that we can only see in Dr. Chandler's very kind and suggestive practice an aggravation of the economical difficulty. If the people flock to the dispensaries for drugs, how much more for good meals! The worthy doctor says that what the people really want is, not drugs, but good advice; that is, rules of health, warning against foolish neglects, and common precaution. It is most true. But, unhappily, it is also true that there is nothing the poor like so little as good advice. They consider medicine a mystery of a very preternatural character; the drug a charm, which is to work a miracle. The plainer a thing is to the unassisted reason, the less will they believe it. They want to be told how they may be cured in a day. They would rather take the most nauseous medicine than obey the simplest and easiest advice.

Of course, with the inducement of a good meal they will listen to the advice, but they will not give it a fair trial.

The economists, of whom we may take Sir Charles Trevelyan as a fair example, tell us that medical relief ought not to be given gratuitously to any who cannot produce some proof of their inability to pay for it. This is easy to say, and no doubt Sir Charles would be ready to assist in giving it practical effect. We have to confess that we do not see how any practical test is to be applied to a crowd struggling for attention, with the very moments precious. The proof must be on paper, and that paper must be the voucher of some trustworthy person declaring that he has made full scrutiny and exercised his judgment in the case. For such a purpose there must be a large staff of paid officers or volunteers, doing the work with more or less industry and sense. District visitors are an easy race, especially when they have a free command of money or equivalent boons. They are obliged to recognise as Divine dispensations many things that rigid economists will regard as human and preventable matter, and therefore militating against a claim to charitable relief—a drunken husband, for instance. Who, then, is to give the guarantee, and be bail, as it were, that the applicant for advice and medicine could not possibly pay for it, even with a little work and self-denial? It is in the interest of the subscribers to our Public Charities, and of the overworked and ill-paid medical profession, that we ask the question. Would it be possible to publish the names of all out-patients, as we publish the names of paupers, whether in or out of the union workhouse? Would it be possible to make them bring the application itself under the public eye? We ask because the question has not been answered hitherto. There remains another solution of the difficulty, and in these days of combination and co-operation it ought not to be regarded as hopeless. Why cannot the working classes of the metropolis, and all who will claim the privileges of that title, form themselves into Sick Friendly Clubs, under any

medical staff they may have their own reasons to prefer? If there is anything that a person ought to provide for in time of health against the day of sickness, it is the advice and medicine necessary for that time itself. We are not aware of any special or local reasons why a practice so common, if not universal, in rural districts is not found in the metropolis. Is it the Hospital and Free Dispensary that makes the Sick Club unnecessary? As things now are, some change is wanted in the interest of the medical profession, of the charitable public, and, above all, of the really poor themselves. They cannot receive the attention they require, because pretenders—impostors we had almost said—force themselves into their place, and appropriate what is intended for the really poor. One thing is certain, and it is a truth the breadth of which becomes every day more manifest and important. Nothing in this world is to be done well broadcast. Man is not to be either employed, fed, ruled, taught or treated by mechanical processes. He has within him an element for good or for evil, assisting or thwarting all that his fellow-men can do for him. It is the moral element. The moral disease, and it is manifold, intrudes itself into the very thick of the physical, and has to be met with equal vigilance and severity. Your out-patient may be all he says that he is—sick enough and helpless; but he may have also another ailment. He may be a base, shabby, roguish fellow, who wishes to be cured by stealing the advice and drugs intended for others, and defrauding the good, charitable givers. That is the moral disease to be cured, and we must still hope that it can be done.

MEDICAL CHARITY.

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—Without intending any disrespect to Dr. Glover, I venture to remark that his letter belongs to the class of loose, indiscriminating, *ad misericordiam* appeals which have reduced

our lower working class to their present state of thoughtless, self-indulgent dependence. Who doubts that medical treatment (drugs included) is beneficial, provided it be suitably and carefully applied? As little question can there be that medical attendance is one of the ordinary requirements of life, and especially of family life, and that, in the absence of proper provision for it, families are often reduced to great straits. But will Dr. Glover deny that our practice of providing for the medical treatment of the working class, and of a portion of the lower middle class, entirely on a gratuitous eleemosynary footing, has been productive of great evils? It has been the first step in the downward course of pauper habits to multitudes; it has spirited away the just remuneration of the medical profession, to their great detriment, as well as to that of the public, through them, in a variety of ways, imposing upon them, as a sort of representative of the rest of the community, a disproportionate burden of charity, which is not really charity, because it is harmful to the recipients; and, by depriving our hospitals and dispensaries of the necessary foundation of self-support, whatever may be the superstructure, it has involved them in a chronic state of bankruptcy from which even the united effort of Hospital Sunday will not relieve them without a change of system.

How unreasonable is an arrangement which recognises no intermediate class between those who can pay the ordinary fees and those who can pay nothing at all, this intermediate class being actually much the largest! If ever there was a case to which the principle of association or mutual assurance should be applied it is this. Dr. Glover's Essex family, as well as every other family of the working class not absolutely destitute, could easily afford the trifling monthly payment required at the provident dispensaries; and thus while, on the one hand, they would have the honest satisfaction of knowing that all their wants of this kind would be attended to without incurring an obligation to anybody; on the other,

the medical men would find in their half-yearly dividend of the aggregate payments, reinforced to any necessary extent by honorary subscriptions, a scale of remuneration not undeserving of their consideration. But it is an indispensable condition of this arrangement that there should be a small countervailing payment, at so much for each attendance, at the out-patient departments of the hospitals; for no one in any rank of life will pay for that which he can obtain elsewhere for nothing. By throwing the burden of proving inability to pay upon the applicants, this would supply a self-acting test; and while the trivial cases which waste the time of the medical officers and prevent proper attention to real sufferers, would to a great extent be sifted off, easy access would be afforded to the best medical and surgical advice to those who are unable to pay the usual fees for that kind of advice which is the special use of hospitals.—I am, &c.,

C. E. Trevelyan.

London, *January* 23.

PHARMACY.

To the Editor of The Times.

Sir,—In reply to the letter of Dr. Glover which appears in *The Times* of to-day, I beg to say that my experience as honorary medical officer of the same dispensary in the North of London has led me to conclusions widely differing from his. I was for eighteen months connected with the institution, and what I saw convinced me that medical charity so dispensed was injurious alike to the medical practitioner and to the public. It injured the medical practitioner because, owing to there not being any sort of inquiry into the circumstances of the applicants, many persons attended there who were perfectly able to pay for medical advice; a considerable number of them, too, for the treatment of ailments the cost of the cure of which ought most certainly not to devolve on the charitable public. It injured the public, because, as

respects the applicants, from the ease with which the undeserving could obtain letters, it helped greatly to weaken and destroy those habits of sturdy independence and forethought on the inculcation and preservation of which must mainly rest our hopes of diminishing pauperism; while, as regards the ladies and gentlemen who grant letters for the dispensary, they were evidently often deluding themselves with the notion of having done an act of Christian kindness, when, if I may be permitted to be a little metaphorical, they were thoughtlessly sowing the seeds of servile dependence—a plant that takes deep and ready root in a community, and ripens rapidly into baneful fruit. It may be interesting to such persons to know that it was for a time my custom, when acting as surgeon at the dispensary, to say to those patients for whom I wrote certificates of inability to work, by which they obtained from their clubs sums of money during their sickness, varying from five to ten or more shillings a week, that I hoped when they became better and got to work again they would, in gratitude, give some trifling donation to the support of the institution; but, so far as I know, no one ever gave a sixpence.

No doubt there are persons treated at all such dispensaries who are truly deserving objects of charity; and if gratuitous medical relief was rigidly confined to such cases much good and no great harm might be done. But from a want of a strictly careful and honest discrimination, you find them treating gratuitously those, on the one hand, who are perfectly able to pay for their own advice, and those, again, on the other, who ought to be under the care of the district medical officer. I could give examples of both in my own district to show how it interferes with the work of the general practitioner and helps to reduce the extra fees of the not-over-remunerated poor law officer. But it all helps to swell the number who attend at the dispensary, on which is largely founded the appeal for contributions from the charitable.

There is no gainsaying that sickness in a poor man's family, especially if chronic, is a very costly business, and also that rents are high and coals and food are dear for the working-man in London. But working-men who can combine so effectually for the purpose of raising their wages by strikes and acquiring the suffrage by political demonstrations, can also combine, if they will, to provide against the contingencies of disease and accident in their families. Nay more, they ought to be encouraged to do so by the extension of a little of that patronage to their sick clubs and other such provident associations which is now lavished on gratuitous dispensaries and hospitals. Granting gratis medical relief is not the way to encourage self-help. Neither should we wait, as Dr. Glover would have us do, till education has permeated society for the appearance among the lower classes of forethought and providence, but rather try to seize and utilise what practical educating power is to be got (and it will be found that much such power will be gained) from insisting at once on habits of self-reliance and prudence in our working class.

As to the illustration Dr. Glover gives in support of his views of a girl with ague able only to spend 6d. on medicine at intervals of three weeks, there was no need for the dispensary to deal with her case at all. Ample provision has already been made by the State for all such cases. Without any trouble beyond that of making her statement to the relieving officer, she would have received the advice of the medical officer of the district, and as much quinine as her complaint required for absolutely nothing but the asking; whereas the dispensary referred to has lately insisted on a charge of 6d. for a letter (which has to be renewed every month), and 2d. a week for medicine—has, in fact, become a provident dispensary of a very mild type. It is too often forgotten that the parochial medical officer is connected with a charity—a charity that insists in the interest of the ratepayer on a thorough scrutiny by a relieving officer—but,

withal, a charity, and in virtue of the inquiry always insisted on not so liable to the terrible abuses of other charities.

Dr. Glover's practical suggestion of paying more respect in judging of the fitness of cases to the nature of the disease, though valuable, will have but little good effect if unaccompanied with this other equally practical hint, that the distributors of letters should make themselves acquainted with the social position of the applicants. If they have not the time or cannot take the trouble to do this personally they should depute some one to do it for them. As a rule they do neither, and the result is a gross abuse of charity. In no case, unless one of urgency, should even medical relief be given without inquiry. Without it, such relief becomes necessarily indiscriminating, and proves in the long run a curse to the community instead of a blessing.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ANDREW D. DUCAT, M.D., District Medical Officer, Highbury.

January 23.

Having spoken above of the desirability of entrusting the compounding of prescriptions and the sale of medicines to a class of men who shall make this their sole business, and eschew the treatment of disease and the study of disease altogether, in fact to the very respectable and trustworthy body of men known in England as chemists and druggists, or pharmaceutical chemists, we are led to remark that in Ireland such a body is practically unknown, having been excluded by the jealousy of the Apothecaries' Company, who have thrown the compounder (apothecary he used to be called) overboard in the issue of their licences, and claim that the holder thereof be esteemed a practitioner, and practise as such, and yet forbid any person to compound without their licence. That is to say, a man is not to compound medicine without an amount of professional knowledge which will qualify him to practise, and make him the rival

of the man whose prescriptions are yet to be sent to him to compound and criticise. This in fact compels the physician in the smaller towns to supply medicines whether he will or no, for to a rival practitioner nothing will induce him to send them.

Now we contend that, in thus acting, the Apothecaries' Hall of Ireland is failing to discharge its public duties. The very purpose for which it was chartered was the supplying of skilled compounders, as such, to the public. This at present it refuses to do unless the candidates agree to undergo an apprenticeship, with a further course of study, and expenditure of time, wholly unsuitable to the business of a compounder, or to the class from which such a trade would naturally be supplied. Not only does the Hall thus fail to supply the wants of the public in this their essential function, but they go further and actually forbid the public to supply their wants from elsewhere, as the laws of demand and supply would soon enable them otherwise to do. Now we shall not ask that the Apothecaries' Hall should cease to license apothecaries to practise medicine; that, it is true, was not the original function of the Apothecary, nor was the issuing of such licences the purpose for which the Hall was chartered; yet the licence of the Halls, both English and Irish, is now recognised as a qualification to practise medicine by the Army, Navy, and Poor Law Boards; though we cannot but think that the requirement of eighteen months' attendance on the medical wards of a hospital, as required by the Irish Hall, or fifteen as required by the English, is much too small an amount of clinical study to warrant the conferring of a licence for medical practice. These points, however, we pass by. But that the Irish Hall fails to discharge its proper function on behalf of the public, and yet will allow no one else to perform it, is a point to be energetically insisted on. In England the place of the Hall in this particular has been occupied, and is admirably filled by the Pharmaceutical Society, who would also willingly occupy

the ground in Ireland were it not that the Apothecaries' Hall stands in the way with its antiquated and obsolete monopoly, by virtue of which they require the candidate for a compounder's licence to undergo an outlay and a loss of time which his present capital and future expectation of profits will not warrant, and which, if borne, must be recouped by charging the public more highly for the compounder's skill than need or ought to be done.

The consequence of this is that nowhere in Ireland is the skilled compounder, pure and simple, to be found. Either a man practising as the rival of others demands that their prescriptions shall be sent to him to compound, and charges an unreasonable amount for his services in compounding them, being able to enforce these demands by reason of the monopoly held by the Hall, or else an unskilled compounder carries on a business unsatisfactory both to himself and the public, under daily fear of the infliction of heavy penalties by the Apothecaries' Company under the monopoly granted by the extinct Irish Parliament.

We shall not, however, ask that the Hall give up the licensing of practitioners; nor yet shall we ask that they shall allow the Pharmaceutical Society to occupy the ground which was originally confided to their charge. But we do ask that, out of consideration for the wants of the public, they shall institute a licence for compounders as such, without requiring the education of a practitioner from the candidates for it, at an unreasonable cost in money and time alike, and with an uncalled for amount of brain power to be used in a pursuit that does not require it. For what are the duties of a compounder? Not, certainly, the preparation of drugs, which used to be an important portion of the apothecaries' functions; but now, in these days of increased commerce, facile communication, enlarged public demand, and consequent great subdivision of labour and centralisation of force, the great drug firms, and the Apothecaries' Hall itself *inter primos*, supply all dealers and compounders much more satis-

factorily and cheaply than they could manufacture their preparations themselves, with their necessarily limited resources and appliances. Hence the function of the compounders is limited in these days to the mere mixing, with a minimum of skill, and a maximum of precaution against mistake, certain prescribed ingredients together; this is all that either the profession or the public require, a mere manipulator's art and skill, with great care as regards correctness. And for this we conceive it can hardly be necessary to undergo two sessions of Anatomy and dissections, two sessions of medical and one of surgical hospital study, one session Midwifery, one session Practice of Medicine, &c., nor to have studied Euclid and algebra, the Catiline war, the Gospel of St. John, and Telemachus. These, we say, are the educational studies of a practitioner, let us say an apothecary, for they are not nearly sufficiently extensive for a physician or surgeon, but for a compounder they are altogether too extensive and wholly unnecessary. We should suggest as studies valuable for the compounding licence we propose, a course of lectures for six months on Theoretical Chemistry, six months lectures on Materia Medica, three months lectures on Botany, and one year practical Compounding under the instructions of an apothecary or pharmaceutical chemist. Afterwards an examination on the subjects above mentioned, including the recognition of articles of the Materia Medica by sight, taste and smell, the doses of drugs, reading of prescriptions, whether Latin or English, which by no means involves an acquaintance with the Latin language, and the demonstration of actual practical skill in the manipulation and compounding of drugs. With these requirements a large class of intelligent and respectable young men would be found able and willing to comply, a valuable addition would be made to the supply of the wants of the public, and a considerable increase would accrue to the funds of the Apothecaries' Hall. The licensed chemist and druggist would soon be found in every village, to the great convenience of the

public, and the relief of the medical practitioner from a department of therapeutics which reflects little honour either on himself or his profession. We foresee objections to this, of course. It will be said so much profit is taken out of the general practitioner's pocket. We reply that if the measures we propose are adopted for reducing the number of practitioners so that each man shall be fully employed, no man will regret that he should be relieved from the drudgery of compounding. It will be said that the druggist's charges will be equal to those of the practitioner, and that the public will thus be prevented from consulting the latter. We reply that in cases where the practitioner's fee was reduced to accommodate the humble circumstances of the patient, an arrangement might be made with the druggist that no charge should be made to the patient, the doctor paying the druggist for his labour, with a small percentage over absolute prices for his drugs. We have known such an arrangement made, the druggist willingly consenting to the smaller profit for the sake of the larger custom it insured. It will be said that this amounts to the old system of supplying your own patients with drugs; so it does, with this important difference, that in the case proposed the doctor would not sell the drugs, but buy them, paying the druggist, however, no more than if he kept a stock himself and had the druggist to make them up, or employed a licensed compounder for that purpose, which many men in large practice might do. It will be said, in that case why not do it himself, and save the expense of paying the druggist? We reply, Very well, if he is not kept sufficiently busy in consulting and visiting, so let him do by all means; only, let him supply them gratis, not charging for his medicines, not making a profit on them, or on this portion of his labour, though he may avoid the loss of paying the druggist. The profit will come in another way, either in an increased number of consultants, or in a slightly increased fee; only let it be a fixed fee according to the means of the consultant, so as to avoid the trading

element in the transaction, the sale of medicines as such. This arrangement with a druggist is often made in England, and works very successfully; it is, be it observed, wholly different from another and reprehensible arrangement according to which the druggist charges the patient and shares the proceeds with the prescribing practitioner; this of course is nothing else than selling drugs by an agent instead of personally, and is no less to be condemned.

But it will further be said, in opposition to the proposal to introduce the pharmaceutical chemist into Ireland, that the humbler classes will ere long come to consult the compounding chemist instead of the doctor. They will ask him what would be the best thing to take for so and so; and if he adds something to the cost of the medicine to pay himself for the exercise of his skill in selecting it they will still not grumble, as it will nevertheless be much cheaper than to consult the practitioner about it. Nay more the druggist will appropriate the prescriptions of the doctor, his favourite cough mixtures, liniments, &c., &c., and use them indiscriminately. This will, no doubt, to a certain extent be the case. But in the first place we must recollect that if we shall have adopted a system which will enable the doctor to keep his hands full with visiting and consulting at proper charges, this will do him no harm. Secondly, we must recollect that the class of persons who will thus consult the druggist would not consult the doctor, no matter how small he made his fee, except for serious illness. They wish, in a trifling ailment, to have as much medical advantage as they can for their fourpence or their sixpence, since they never would spend five shillings nor even two shillings and sixpence on the treatment of a slight matter. Thirdly, knowing the druggist not to be a practitioner these same persons would consult the doctor on a proper charge in any case of serious illness. In these trifling ailments the humble knowledge of the druggist or compounder will, therefore, be a decided advantage to the humbler classes of the public, who must otherwise treat themselves in utter

ignorance, or suffer. Something will be put into the druggist's pocket no doubt, but he will have fairly earned it by conferring a corresponding benefit on a humble class of society. Nothing, we believe, will be taken out of the practitioner's pocket, though if he be a dispensary doctor some labour will be saved him; certainly nothing would be taken out of his pocket if things were as they ought to be, when the practitioner, having plenty of legitimate work to do, would not stoop, as he now too often does, to selling pennyworths of tartar emetic, or two-pennyworths of quassia or castor oil. If any difference is made to the practitioner it will be in the lightening of the work of the dispensary doctor by saving him the trouble of treating without recompence all these minute ailments for which the druggist can very well give a pill or a powder, thus encouraging the feeling of self-respect among the poor, while putting something into the pocket of a worthy member of society. The doctor's prescriptions will be appropriated to a certain extent no doubt, but the idea that the druggist will venture to use any but the simplest of such, what in fact he could have made up himself without any prescription, suggests to our mind the reply that there really is some difference between the adaptation of a physician's prescription to the particular case for which it is designed and the adaptation to each other of the parson's famous text and sermon, of which the author wrote that the beauty of the text was that it would suit any sermon, and the beauty of the sermon was that it would suit any text.

It must be remembered that the unqualified assistant in England actually does this very thing, namely, give pills and powders for ordinary ailments without consulting his principal, and sometimes even treats important cases also. Yet it must be remembered that the public have a right to employ whom they please, doctor, druggist, unqualified assistant, or quack, and that the person so employed has a right to remuneration according to the value, or supposed value, of the service rendered. The question, therefore, whether a druggist ought

to be allowed to sell medicines to be used for such and such ailments, he being told the ailments and giving what he thinks best for them, that is in fact prescribing or treating like the practitioner, but without his education or skill, this we say, is a question for the public rather than for us, for we cannot hope in these days of liberty of action to preserve a monopoly of practice; all that we can accomplish is to take care that the medical practitioner shall be well qualified, and known to be so, and that the druggist, or other person, being unqualified, shall be known to be so, and then let the public make their choice, when, undoubtedly, in nearly all serious cases we may rely upon their choosing the qualified man. If it be yet asked, why should not the profit on the sale of these pennyworths and two-pennyworths of medicine, or it may be six-pennyworths or shillingworths, go into the pocket of the doctor instead of into that of the druggist, we reply, first, and principally, because it is unsuited to the dignity, position, and respectability of a profession to make money in this manner; the doctor might as well sell sugar and soap, tooth-brushes and pomatum; secondly, because if we sufficiently reduce the numbers of our profession, we shall be able to make the same, or rather a much larger, amount of profit with less trouble.

While we are writing on this subject we may discuss another question, namely, whether this is not a department of the medical treatment of the public into which women might be fairly and with advantage introduced. We shall at a later period discuss the question of the admission of women into the profession; but, whatever views may be taken on this subject, there can, we conceive, be no reasonable objection made to the introduction of women to the compounding business. The studies necessary are quite within their capacity, at least when their natural capacity is stimulated by the earnestness which would be developed by the necessity of earning their bread, a necessary preliminary motive to the undertaking of any occupation by women. The necessary

accuracy would be acquired by habit; and the manipulative processes are peculiarly suited to the female sex. We have known women of intelligence, but who had not received any of the special education above proposed, become very good and satisfactory compounders merely by practice in a hospital or dispensary, so much so as to be employed by a physician in compounding his prescriptions for his private patients; indeed our experience is that women of intelligence are exceedingly apt at learning the work of compounding and dispensing. Add to these considerations that there are no unseemly studies necessary as a preparation for this department, that there is no severe physical labour, or exposure to the elements, for which a woman's strength and constitution might be unfitted, no sudden demands on nerve, or on breadth or depth of thinking powers which a woman might be incapable of commanding, and the fact that, from the business having been hitherto practised by a branch of the medical profession, it ranks higher than mere retail trading, and we shall probably arrive at the conclusion that in this department of the healing art there is an honourable and independent position, with easy occupation, for thousands of women who now overstock the governesses' labour market in an anomalous and almost servile position.

To the profession an advantage in this arrangement would be that it would still farther widen the gap between the medical practitioner and the compounder; and everything that would act in this direction we cannot but regard as tending to the elevation of the profession in public esteem and in social position. No person could suppose that the lady-compounder was a practitioner, though she might perhaps combine the functions of a nurse and a midwife with those of a compounder, as might easily be done if two sisters were in partnership, and with much advantage to the public; and though occasionally she might be asked by the humbler classes to give something that would be good for such and such an ailment, leaving it to her judgment to select the

remedy, yet she might be trusted more fully than a man not to go beyond her knowledge, but to recommend that the doctor be consulted, with whom she would as a rule be naturally on the best of terms; and she might be relied upon not to attempt the practice of quackery, or the independent treatment of disease. If in the course of the next three years 1,000 or 1,200 male and female compounders were instructed and licensed by the Apothecaries' Hall, and scattered broadcast over Ireland, we believe that the public would be benefited by cheap and efficient compounding, the ladies themselves would be benefited by the discovery of an occupation suitable for them; the profession would be benefited by having this portion of its drudgery taken off its shoulders, or done for it as cheaply as its members could do it for themselves, and would, as we have said, be still more benefited by being freed from an occupation unsuited to their status; and the Apothecaries' Hall would be benefited by the large amount of fees which would come in for these new licences, whether for men or women, say £5 a piece for 1,200 candidates, besides fees for instruction, say for nine months, in the art of compounding and in the subjects of examination; nor would this interfere with their licensing gentlemen as practitioners as heretofore.* Neither can we believe that the great compounding establishments of the metropolis and other large

* Since writing the above, we learn that the Pharmaceutical Society in England has actually adopted the innovation above proposed, having admitted females to its pharmaceutical classes with a view to conferring on them a licence to compound prescriptions and sell medicines. This step is even more wanted in Ireland, where there are no compounders pure and simple, than in England where they are numerous. We cannot but hope that the Apothecaries' Hall of Ireland will shortly follow suit; or, if it decline, that one or other of our Universities will take the matter up. The Apothecaries' Hall is the natural body to undertake it; but, failing it, if one of the Universities were to declare certain persons qualified by education, and after examination, to practise Pharmacy, an Act of Parliament would soon be obtained entitling them so to do, the compounding of prescriptions included, the Apothecaries' Hall monopoly notwithstanding.

towns would suffer by this arrangement of licensing compounders who shall not be practitioners, since their customers are of a totally different class, being in fact the consultants of the consulting physicians and surgeons of the metropolis, who would still have their prescriptions made up at the leading establishments, whereas what we suggest is that the Hall should bring within their own licences the drug-compounding which is at present carried on, principally in provincial towns and villages, by unlicensed druggists, and also by the general practitioner, who, while despising the title of apothecary, and the licence of the Hall (for does he not boast the L.F.P.S., or the L.R.C.S.E.?) yet makes his real profits by the sale of medicines as a druggist; indeed we have seen in his shop-window, and on his labels, the title A—— B——, surgeon and druggist, and have blushed to see it. This it is which at present most degrades the profession as a class, and most leads the sister professions of the Bar and the Church, and with them the general public, to look down on a profession no less noble than either, no less useful to the public and the individual, no less following in the steps of Him who went about doing good and healing.

Now as regards the admission of ladies, ladies of a higher class and better education than would be necessary or desirable in the case of the female compounder, ladies who would not, indeed, undertake the occupation of a compounder, we say, as regards the question, so much discussed at the present time, of their admission to the full qualification and status of medical practitioners, there is something to be said on both sides of the question.

We have complained of the overstocking of the profession, and have written much with the view of effecting the removal of this unfortunate condition of things as being the first step towards any real improvement of the profession in social status as well as pecuniary emolument. There would seem at first sight to be some danger lest the admission of women to the profession might increase the numbers who have to

make their bread thereby, and so lessen the amount earned by each, since we have laid it down as certain that, under present circumstances at least, a fixed amount, and no more, will be annually paid by the public for the treatment of their diseases. But upon further consideration there does not seem to be much danger to be apprehended in this direction. The number of members within the profession is really not affected by the sex of the members, which after all is a totally different question. If the average earnings of the male practitioners of the profession are reduced to any appreciable extent by the female practitioners, so will the attractiveness of the profession be diminished *pari passu*, and hence a smaller number of male candidates will present themselves, so that this matter will right itself. The question as far as this is concerned is only whether the earnings of the profession are to be divided among $a + b$, a being the number of male practitioners and b the number of female, or are to be divided among c only, c being equal to $a + b$ and consisting of male practitioners only. And we believe that the number of female practitioners will always be almost inappreciable as compared with the number of gentlemen; and this for many reasons. It is not a direction of study which would attract the taste of many women even among those who have to devote themselves to some occupation for the sake of earning their bread. The educational labour is arduous and disagreeable, and the subsequent toil in practice is no less so. And among women of the class we speak of there are not many who willingly devote themselves to any occupation for the sake of earning their bread until the days when they can learn how to study are almost over. For the natural direction of the thoughts of every young woman is towards marriage; that is the sphere for which she was destined by Nature, and all her early thoughts, habits, training, and education have that in view. Not until circumstances compel her does she think of earning her own bread, and as we have said, but few even then would select the medical profession as their mode of so

doing. Whether it is an advantage to the sex, or to men, that a girl's training and teaching in her early days should be so completely devoted to what it is supposed will render her attractive in the matrimonial market is another question. The accomplishments which, as is supposed, will be most calculated to attract a lover are certainly not those which will make the best wife and mother when she reaches those grades. As regards her education indeed, her mental culture, we hold that even a contemplation of all these three purposes is insufficient; that her mind ought to be cultivated with reference to herself as an intellectual being, rather than with reference to any future work in life, just as we give our young men a general education before we give them any special training for any special pursuit. And similarly we hold that every young woman whose position and means permit it ought to receive a wide and thorough general education, scientific and literary, apart from any ulterior views, either of marriage, or of a professional sphere, or any mode of occupation in the world's life and work, simply for the sake of cultivating her own mind and the intellect that the Almighty has endowed her with; or if any ulterior end be held in view it ought to be that she may be an intelligent observer of her husband's life work, stimulating and encouraging him by her sympathy and her interest therein; and further, that she may be competent to direct in a healthy and vigorous channel the early intellectual efforts of her children, which Nature has committed specially to her care.

Sadly indeed do mankind suffer from the neglect of a scientific and thoughtful direction of the female mind, and severely does our neglect of her compulsory education in this direction recoil upon ourselves; we say advisedly her compulsory education, for nothing short of compulsion will effect it; for, notwithstanding all the outcry that is made by the shrieking sisterhood regarding the want of education for women, nothing can be clearer than this, that if a *bonâ fide* demand on the part of women existed for such education it

would be forthcoming, owing to the natural action of the law in accordance with which a market supply is speedily forthcoming for every market demand.

Why then, they will ask, is it not forthcoming in matters medical? Simply, we reply, because there is no such demand; because the number of those who select this as their life's work is so small that it is not worth any man's while to form classes, schools, or hospitals, for their special benefit. And when they ask that they shall study matters medical, surgical, and anatomical, along with male students, we cannot but think that they outrage delicacy and modesty, not only that of the female, but also that of the male mind. We well remember in our own student days the intense repugnance we felt to the presence of a woman in the class-room, when the subject of instruction was merely certain physiological studies in scientific botany, which could not be omitted, but which suggested analogies in the animal world that rendered the presence of females at the lectures intolerable. So strongly was this felt by the male students that on one occasion the words "*exeat mulier*" were found chalked on the lecturer's board before his arrival, so as to attract his attention on his arrival; and we believe that any lecturer who admits women to his medical classes will find the number of his male students seriously decrease.

In ordinary scientific studies, indeed, we should be most strongly in favour of common class-rooms for both sexes, as frequently used in America, and with marked advantage to both sexes; for the female mind derives breadth and depth from association with their fellow-students of the other sex, and from the habit of having subjects treated so as to suit the broader and deeper mind of young men; while on the other hand the male mind receives a stimulating effect from the usually superior quickness of the female mind; and the purifying, elevating, and refining effect of association with the female students is of no less value. If early attachments should be formed, we believe that this is no more than

Nature intends, and that the result would not only be to keep a young man pure in his contact with the world, but even that the stimulating effect on his mind would be of the highest value :—

> "For indeed I know
> Of no more subtle master under heaven
> Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
> Not only to keep down the base in man,
> But teach high thought, and amiable words,
> And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

To the suggestion that scandal or injury to morals might arise from such association, we reply that we have more trust in the young women of England than to believe this possible. The moral tone and watchfulness of feminine public opinion under such circumstances would be of the highest and strictest kind, and no isolated individual would dare to encounter it, even if personally not on a level with it.

All this we apply to ordinary scientific and literary education and culture. But with regard to anatomical and physiological, medical and surgical studies, no! This would not only be an outrage on modesty, but also an effectual bar to any thorough or scientific instruction of the male students.

Do we then argue that these studies are in themselves unfit for women? No, certainly not. Science is pure; Nature is pure; her structures are the handiwork, her operations the appointment, of the Almighty Creator. Nor do we believe that the highest purity, even of the female mind, consists in ignorance of the structure and functions of the human body, but rather in a pure knowledge of them, any more than we believe that the highest virtue consists in ignorance of evil, but rather in this, that, knowing evil, one deliberately refuses it and chooses the good. Nor do we think that there would be any indelicacy in the study by women of any portions of anatomical, physiological, surgical or medical science, provided only that male students were

absent. Trying to the lecturer some portions of his subject would undoubtedly be; but we presume that the most trying portions might be omitted; they could not be omitted in mixed classes without doing injustice to the male students; but they might surely be left out in the female classes without injury to the breadth or thoroughness of the female study of medicine; for no person, surely, supposes that any female practitioner would undertake practice for both sexes, nor do they, we conceive, put forward any such claims or pretensions; nor would they have the slightest chance of succeeding in maintaining them, since no male patient would ever send for a female practitioner be his disease ever so simple or common to both sexes. No; the whole point and upshot of the movement for female medical education consists in this, that it is a trying matter for gentlemen to treat female diseases, trying both to practitioner and patient; and it is so; and more trying a great deal to the patient than to the practitioner, for he regards the whole business so thoroughly from the scientific point of view that, however trying the procedure, he is absolutely not conscious of any other idea, and, meeting his patient afterwards as a friend, has absolutely no recollection that any circumstances or discussions requiring a veil to be thrown over them have ever occurred. We say that his mind is an absolute blank regarding such, and that apart from his scientific consideration of them they do not present themselves to his mind. But we can well understand that with his patient it might be different, and that, much more than any subsequent recollection of them, the actual circumstances in their occurrence must be unendurable, particularly in the case of young unmarried women. We can conceive cases, nay we have known them, in which unmarried ladies would endure anything rather than consult a gentleman practitioner, but who would of course have no objection whatever to consult a thoroughly educated lady practitioner, or to undergo operative interference at her hands.

Now what we urge is this; Is it not a reasonable demand on the part of the female sex, patients and practitioners, or students, alike, that provision should be made for this class of cases? In fact a large amount of remediable human suffering is at present in existence, and continues, and will continue, unrelieved, merely from the absence in society at the present time of the educated female practitioner to supply the want that is so urgently felt by these often sorely afflicted and distressed sisters of humanity.

What, let us ask, would be the condition of the male sex if they had none but female practitioners to consult? The ludicrous aspect of such a situation may perhaps obscure the practical, but if we nevertheless consider the practical view of it we shall see that, horrible as the idea is, it hardly overdraws the picture of what is, at the present moment, pressing on many ladies of refined, delicate, sensitive minds, whom we, as the stronger portion of humanity, are bound to care for, cherish, and assist in their distresses to the best of our ability. We may well suggest the question whether delicacy is not more constantly and more frightfully outraged by compelling females to consult men in such cases than it could possibly be by the instruction of a female class by a male lecturer in any scientific subject, or any branch of knowledge of their own frames, however trying.

It will be observed that we are not exactly referring to midwifery practice, nor do we think that to be exactly the place where the greatest strain on the female mind is experienced. It must be admitted by the most ardent advocate of female practice that obstetrics never became a science till it was placed in the hands of men; that from the days of Shiphrah and Puah down to the celebrated case of Mademoiselle La Valliere, midwifery was not even an art, much less a science, that it was, in fact, what it still is among the country *sages-femmes* of the lower classes, a horror and a reproach, a scandal to that quasi-civilisation that creates a want almost unknown to savage women, and then fails to

supply it. Yet even this fact, that to men alone is due the bringing of obstetrics to the position of a science, is no argument in reply to the demand that now, when we have so cultivated it, we should bring women up to our level in it, leaving it to their sisters in their time of need to employ them if they safely can, or us if they needs must. Indeed, we hardly think that we have much to fear in midwifery practice from female competition; the business is one hardly fitted for the more delicate female of the professional rank, and we think that the patients themselves fully appreciate the difference in breadth and grasp, in comprehensiveness, vigour, and decision, between a man's mind and a woman's, of which the state of midwifery before men took it up is an illustration, and which we cannot but think exists to this day as an inherent natural distinction between the intellectual powers of the sexes; and this notwithstanding the well-known brilliancy and aptness of the female mind in the reception of knowledge.

But, we say, midwifery is not the sore point. The married woman is not under such fearful obligations of modest reticence as the unmarried; and it is especially on behalf of the young unmarried woman suffering from disease that nothing would induce her to speak of to a gentleman practitioner, not to say to submit, it may be, to operation at his hands, that we urge that there is a real need in society for the thoroughly educated lady practitioner, to succour those for whose aid the circumstances of their sex, their condition, nay their very disease and urgent need itself have made us powerless. The number of female practitioners, we say, will not be many; not more than will be sufficient to supply the real need of them that society feels, and this for an obvious reason, namely, through the action of the inexorable laws that govern supply and demand; society will not afford an attractive recompense to a number greater than that of which it feels the need; and as far as competition against ourselves is concerned, on the one hand, as we have shown,

the lady practitioner will fill a place we should never have been allowed to fill, and in so far will have a source of emolument which would never have reached us in any case, so far, in fact, changing the relations of the profession to the public as actually to enhance the sum total of its emoluments; and, on the other hand, we have only to raise somewhat the standard of our tests for admission to the profession, in order that, for every well qualified and really needed lady who passes the barriers, we may trip up ten or a dozen young gentlemen who would never be of any real use to the world in this profession, and who only eat up what the earnest and competent workers ought to have for their reward.

Moreover, women are at present, and will for many years continue to be, severely handicapped in medical studies. Their earlier thoughts generally leading them, as we have said, in quite another direction, they are hardly likely to begin the study of medicine until an age when young men in general will, perhaps have even completed their professional studies; and even at that age it will probably be the case for many years to come that scientific thought and study will be to them the opening of a completely new field, in which time will be required before they can become habituated to its modes and methods. On the whole view of this question therefore we come to the conclusion that well-educated female practitioners have a great and noble field of usefulness open to them for the medical profession, and that, far from discouraging their entry into it, we ought, for the sake of society, and, as Carmichael says, to render our profession a more useful body to the public, to afford every facility for entering it to the few applicants who may come forward for that purpose; absolutely prohibiting, however, their study of objectionable parts of the course along with male students. In Chemistry, Botany for the most part, Institutes and Principles of Medicine, Materia Medica, for the most part, and portions of other subjects there will be but little objection.

We have said above that one of the remarkable social characteristics of the present day is the growing habit of workmen in all departments of labour to band themselves together into societies, Trades-unions, or Associations for mutual protection, and the furthering of the interests of the individual members.

It is felt that thus only can such interests be duly secured against the undue pressure of circumstances which may unfairly tell, in the case of individuals, against the unrestrained operation of the laws of supply and demand which govern the price of every kind of labour, as well as of every other marketable commodity. When a worker, powerless as an individual, and held in the grasp of circumstances, as the agricultural labourers have hitherto been, is able to invoke for his protection, or for his aid in furthering his welfare, the assistance of all his fellow-workers, he is backed by an agency it is impossible to resist; impossible, at least, so long as those who so combine do not, under mistaken leadership, and in ignorance of economical laws which they can neither control or evade, mistake their powers, over-step their sphere of action, and destroy, by insane miscalculation, both their own interests and those of the public and the country. As increased consumption, and consequent demand, has increased the profits to be made in various trades and manufactures, an increased demand for labour to supply such trades has followed. The higher wages naturally resulting from this increased demand for their labour, or increased value in their labour, the operatives in each trade, manufacture, or occupation, have been able to secure to themselves by means of this system of combination and mutual aid. The circumstances which necessitate the intervention of such combination to secure the natural and necessary results of the operation of such increased profits may be compared to the friction inevitable in the working of even the most perfect machines. The social machine does not work altogether without friction; the workman may be, for instance, much

underpaid at one place, while wages even above what he is legitimately entitled to, according to the average demand for, and supply of, his particular kind of labour, may be obtainable elsewhere; but this elsewhere may imply a distance of 250 miles, or more, and he may be unable to remove thither; or combinations may exist among masters to keep wages down below the proper amount, as we have known to be the case among the farmer class in England of late. Against such results of what we have called the friction of the social machine, co-operation and combination afford an effectual protection. And it is now universally admitted that the workmen have a right to combine—nay, even under certain circumstances to strike, in order to enforce their rights, or protect their interests; it is admitted that they are not bound by any law, human or Divine, to postpone their own interests to those of that society which is their real employer. Only they are bound by all law not directly to injure society in thus vindicating their own interests. But if society wants their labour, let it pay them for it as much as they can compel it, for it is society that ultimately pays, and not the ostensible employer, a point that they completely overlook. But when they refuse their services, except on terms which drive employment and wages elsewhere, they injure not society merely, but themselves also; this consideration they also overlook, as well as the converse of the proposition that increased demand for products makes an increased demand for the labour of the producer—namely, that with diminished demand for products, the producer's labour falls in value, and he must be content with lower wages. Their ignorance of political economy thus injures them, while self-interest never fails to guide them on the path by which wages may at any time be raised. But for the effecting of this purpose they have invariably found that union and organisation are necessary. It would be strange, then, if in our profession we should be able without such union and organisation to fight our common battle, and

secure our professional and individual interests. Not that it is possible for union or combination to any extent permanently to raise the value of the services of any particular individual above their independent standard, or ultimately to secure for him a higher payment for them than this would entitle him to receive. The great laws of supply and demand are immutable in their nature, and invariable in their operation, and on these, and these alone, does the value of labour in any department depend. All that the union and co-operation above spoken of can effect, as regards wages, is to secure any given individual against the combination of circumstances or influences which might operate unfavourably against him in particular when the average value of the services of his fellow-workmen in the department of labour to which he belongs has, or ought to have, become increased, in accordance with these laws. To illustrate this point, we may say that if in our profession we were, by a unanimous co-operative decree, rigidly carried out by every member of the profession, to fix a rate of payment for our services at double what it now is, the higher profits so obtained, assuming that Society would not instantly halve our employment, as it most assuredly would, yet for the sake of illustrating the operation of the principle let us assume that it would not do so, then the increased profits would draw double the number of members into the profession, an open profession be it remembered, and by the intensity of the competition so generated the profits of the individual would be reduced to perhaps one half of what they were previous to the enactment of such an arbitrary decree.

It will be asked, does not the operation of the laws of supply and demand of itself limit our numbers till the profits of the profession are on an average equal to those of other occupations? We think not; we think this is one case of the operation of influences adverse to the perfect working of economic laws. There are influences at work which very materially complicate the simple action of this principle in

this case. There is a tendency in all professions to become overstocked by the classes socially below them, as affording these classes a means of rising in social position, and for the sake of such rise in position a great deal of pecuniary emolument is willingly sacrificed, for it must be remembered that the rise in status is immediate, while the foregone emolument is to the newly passed professional man only prospective. But, other professions being practically closed, some even by a fixed limitation of numbers, like the Church and the Army, the weight of the action of this tendency is thrown upon our profession, which is completely open; and so it will continue until we practically close it, as other professions are closed. Therefore, to assume some fixed principle of action, by means of which we may be able *pro ratâ*, or by a sliding scale, to limit our own numbers, is the only possible way of raising the value of our services, whether pecuniarily or socially, in accordance with these laws of supply and demand. And since in the educational organisation of our colleges, and in the necessity established by law of passing an examination as to fitness for the practice of the profession, we have a means at hand capable of thus limiting our numbers, we shall be blind to our own interests if we do not thus limit them—let us say, if we do not make it worth the while of our Licensing Bodies to do this on our behalf. When an increased value shall thus have been given to our services, one in some degree commensurate with their importance to Society, then union and co-operation will be able to secure for each member of the profession a simultaneous move upward in the matter of public salaries; as regards private fees, the movement will be more gradual for each; indeed, we should recommend that, at least in any place where fees are now at a fair average, this upward move should consist only in the wider and more constant employment of each practitioner, and in a more punctual payment for his services.

But it is not so much in consequence of their bearing on the interests of the isolated individual that we regard

union and organisation as being of importance in our profession, as in consequence of their bearing on the welfare of the profession regarded as a whole. The principle of cohesion is that which gives a mighty, because a concentrated, effect to the mass social, as well as the mass physical. Organisation is the agency by which united effect is produced; it is the great principle by means of which all the most important part of the world's work is done; in connexion with the principle of discipline and subordination, which, indeed, is involved and included in perfect organisation, it can do anything. And the capacity for organising is the highest given to man. It is the highest result of that capacity for abstract ideas by which man is distinguished from the brute creation. It is, indeed, that which makes a man king among his fellows; which puts power into the hands of one, through the adding by others of their force to his, in accordance with his direction. And the highest capacity next to this is that of becoming thus organised, of submitting to such organisation. This it is which distinguishes the sane man from the insane, and makes it possible for two sane men to control a whole ward full of the insane.

The organisation of the legal profession has been always effective, and hence to a great extent the high position which that profession has attained, and the great influence which it has always exercised in Society. The military profession is one of organisation in its very essence, and we have seen it of force to overturn kingdoms, and bring whole nations under the power of him who might be able to wield its organisation effectively. The ecclesiastical system of organisation has for twelve centuries been of the most perfect kind; and hence is due, to a great extent, that power by which it has secured its own elevation to the highest social dignities, and by which, at least in its days of most perfect organisation and discipline, it held the whole of Europe, intellectually, as well as politically and socially, prostrate beneath its sway.

To such supreme power we do not aspire. Our rule over Society must be by means of the weapons of science and calm reason, not by those of the sword, nor yet of dogma resting on the grounds of authority alone. And if our empire be less absolute and less extensive, it will assuredly not be less beneficial to mankind, although it will be beneficial directly in proportion to its extent and universality, instead of inversely, as in the cases cited. Nor are our functions of less importance than theirs, though of later date and origin. The star of Science and Reason rises as that of authoritative dogma sets. Too long has mankind groaned beneath the yoke of opinion imposed from without, a yoke against which all our professional traditions and modes of thought rebel, for no professional training or habit of thought so much as ours developes the power of originating opinion from within. And to our resistance to the imposition of opinion by external authority is due, no doubt, the angry taunt of dogmatists levelled at our profession, "*Tres medici, duo Athei.*" Yet are we neither Atheists, nor yet infidels, nor unbelievers in anything for the belief of which reasonable grounds not open to reasonable objection are afforded us. We merely ask that we shall be given such fair inferential proof of what we are asked to believe as would be considered sufficient to warrant our belief in any conclusion of science, say, in the correctness of the theory of variation by natural selection. No wonder, then, that the taunt of Atheism is levelled at us; for if a man will neither believe nor yet disbelieve exactly as he is told to do, without asking for reasons, he is obviously unmanageable, and an unbeliever, and an unbeliever is, of course, an Atheist. Yet none contemplate with more wonder and devout admiration than we do the marvellous handiwork of the Creator, as displayed in those physical forces and vital organisms with which our daily life is conversant, and the physical laws which He has appointed for the orderly governance of the universe of Nature. Too long have the laws of man alone held universal sway; it is our

mission, as a profession, to assert the rule of the laws of Nature; they are the laws of God. Alike in every sphere it is ours to labour, and already the work is going on. Beginning at the lowest stratum, like our Divine Master, we have already burst the cruel chains of the lunatic, and given him kindness for stripes, and have taught the idiot and imbecile to take his place, however lowly, among the workers of humanity; we have now to go on to teach the higher strata of Society the value of pure air, pure water, pure food, and to exorcise the demons of filth, poison, infection, and contagion. Will any one say that this is a work of less importance to the welfare of Society, less fraught with blessing, than any work in return for which the lawyers and ecclesiastics have been exalted to the highest place of rank and power? Is the sanitary administration of the country inferior in importance to the administration of justice; or the cultivation of free scientific thought of less value than the inculcation of authoritative dogma? So long as the ecclesiastic was supposed to hold in his hands the issues of the next life it was not to be wondered at that men should place themselves in submission to him in this life; but all that is now changed; the minister of the Gospel has to declare the relations of the individual to the Almighty; and the politics and dignities of this world are not, or, at least, ought not to be, his concern as a minister. The judge, the administrator of the law, was deservedly placed, by the will of the Sovereign, in a position of honour; and, as an eminent statesman lately said, in addressing an audience of barristers, "Those Governments which have endeavoured to deal with the profession of the law in a manner not acceptable to its members have felt that, at least so far as their own comfort and convenience were concerned, it would have been better never to have made the attempt." And far be it from us to endeavour to detract from the position or eminent national services of the legal profession; we only say that those of our own profession are no less important or valuable. We

repeat that the influence of our profession on Society as a whole, apart from its bearing on the health or life of isolated individuals, is of equal importance with that of either the legal or the ecclesiastical professions, and that we are entitled to claim, and, we believe, will ere long be awarded, no less recompense of honour and dignity than either. We shall then command, moreover, a social position and respect which is at present denied to us. At present we may be entitled to respect, but we can hardly be said to command it. When Sir A—— B—— receives in his hall, as we have known him do, a physician of University education and degree, and of as old a family as his own, when the latter calls for the purpose of soliciting his support at a dispensary election (Oh, when shall it be the profession that are canvassed to undertake a post, instead of the electors that are canvassed for their votes), when the petty baronet receives the physician in his hall as if he were a ploughman, and does not even ask him to walk into his library, much less to be seated, he does not, certainly, do the individual doctor much harm; rather he shows his own littleness of mind and inferior breeding; but he puts a slight on the medical profession which it does not deserve, and omits a courtesy and respect which he would not dare to omit to the rector, who is the doctor's father, or the barrister, who may be his brother, and which the profession ought for the future to prevent, by vindicating for itself a position in Society which would make a repetition of the insolence impossible. When Mrs. Muddlepuddle, the little squireen's wife in a remote country district, gives a dinner to the regiment of the neighbouring town, and sends the surgeon, a middle-aged, married, field-officer, down to dinner after a young unmarried subaltern, as we have seen her do, she fails to reduce the regimental or social rank which the Queen and Society have conferred on him, and only exhibits her own ignorance of etiquette and want of natural good breeding in trying to do so; but she gives a hint to the profession to take more effective measures to assert its position

and social status, so that the fear of public comment on her conduct may prevent such a display of boorish malevolence.

In the case of a physician who has to undertake a dispensary we must add to such social slights the petty insolence of the village publican, who writes P.L.G. after his name with as much pride as if it were K.G., and takes upon himself to belabour the doctor with insolence about his cases if he meets him on the road; the orders of the parish administrator, or his curate, who are not even guardians, or on the dispensary committee, but who know that the doctor dare not reply to them under penalty of dismissal from his post; the difficulties even with the relieving officer, who will venture to dispute the doctor's diagnosis of a case, as in an instance which lately obtained some notoriety; and we have a picture of a state of things which, certainly, ought to be unheard of as attaching to service in a learned and noble profession, and which, if only known to the student before he had irrevocably committed himself to the profession, would prevent any man who had any of the feelings of a gentleman from tying himself for life to its amenities.

Now, to amend this state of things, and attain our due relative social rank and position, organisation is, above all things, wanting. Only by organisation can the voice of the profession, as that of one man, be brought to bear upon the powers that be. Only by organisation can political influence be acquired, and only by political influence can the profession vindicate for itself a due reward for its labours. Nay, more, only by organisation can it claim for itself its proper functions in those social labours, those labours that bear rather on Society at large than on the individual, in return for which such reward can alone be given. For this has hitherto been one of the essential defects in the relation of our profession to the world, that we laboured only for the individual, isolated in each particular case, and our reward was from the individual only: there was no widespread

public benefit; there was no aggregated public return. The utmost that could be done by any one member of the profession was to accumulate a large number of isolated individual benefits, by which Society at large scarcely felt itself to be touched. In these islands the discoverer of vaccination and the inventor of chloroform, have, indeed, shone forth pre-eminent in their benefit to Society, every person feeling that he, too, is personally a sharer in the blessing. From the first of these Society withheld his reward; for the second a baronetcy was held a sufficient return for the discovery of a boon compared with which the services of the founders of nine out of ten of our peerages are but a trifle. "*Sic vos non vobis.*"

But in the administration of the various departments of Public Medicine, now only beginning to be formed into a separate department, the influence of the physician will be widely diffused, and the benefits of his skill and labour will affect Society in the mass, rather than in the individual. In the various departments of the Poor Law, Insanity, and Sanitary Science, the administration will be social, rather than individual, in its aspects, and, with the ever-increasing weight of the people in politics and government, the true importance and value of such medical administration will be ever more and more perceived, and if we be true to ourselves we shall ere long obtain the tardy justice of a fitting social reward. We repeat, if we be true to ourselves; if we no longer remain, as has been said, for all practical purposes a disorganised rabble; if we can learn a lesson from all the numerous organisations, political, professional, and operative, which surround us on every side; if we can learn that union is strength, that the weakest organisation is better than none, and that discipline, and obedience to selected leaders will accomplish more, even with inferior organisation and inferior leaders, than the best leaders and the best organisation can effect if discipline be broken through, and every man pretends to decide his own course of action for himself,

rather than follow the expressed judgment of the majority of his brethren. We speak, of course, of united action for common ends; not of opinions which do not bear on the common welfare or course of action.

We have, therefore, rejoiced to see the principle of association for common purposes making way so much of late among the members of the profession. For it seems to us to be a matter of inferior importance what the precise object of association and co-operation may be, so long as the advantages of association are perceived, and the power conferred by union and co-operation is clearly appreciated. The principle of united action is making its way in the professional mind, and the habit of co-operation is being developed, whatever be the exact object for the present held in view, or the precise extent to which such co-operation is carried out. Not only is the principle thus strengthened by exercise and habit, "*Vires acquirit eundo*," but organised societies are more capable, by the very fact of their existing organisation, of farther union and amalgamation than individuals can possibly be. We rejoice, therefore, holding in view the organisation of the whole profession into one gigantic Association, to see the number of professional Associations that are springing up in all directions. Some of them have only an ephemeral existence; nay, more, some have even avowed their existence for a passing purpose. For some it has been sufficient to set a movement on foot, and then leave it to be taken up by more powerful Associations which nevertheless might not have originated it. The British Medical Association was constituted with the object of studying medical science, but have first permitted papers on medical politics to be presented to them, as it were, out of order, and have afterwards constituted a section devoted to this purpose, which has made valuable use of its power since. The Irish Medical Association, on the other hand, made the politics and interests of the profession their object from the first. We have also a Poor Law Medical Officers' Association

in each kingdom ; and certainly the special grievances of Poor Law Medical Officers seem to demand a special organisation, or at least a special department of some wider organisation to make them known, and strive by degrees to work towards redress. There is also the St. Andrew's Medical Graduates' Association, the Medical Teachers' Association of London, and some minor local societies in addition to those specially devoted each to some particular scientific department of the profession. These latter we shall leave out of our present consideration, as they have special and solely scientific functions. With regard to the others, or the Associations more or less devoted to the interests of the profession as such, we would fain hope that an appreciation of the advantages of union would gradually lead to an amalgamation of all of them on mutually advantageous terms. Something, no doubt, would have to be conceded by each party to such a union, but we firmly believe that the general gain would far outweigh anything lost by such concession.

When we speak of an amalgamation we are far from proposing that individuality or local association should be sunk by the smaller Association in the larger, by the Irish in the British. Ireland is sufficiently distinct from Great Britain, not only in her professional system, but also in her departments of Administrative Government, to make it always essential that the profession in Ireland should have an Association of their own, with a local executive to watch over their interests ; it is therefore not absorption that we propose, but co-operation, joint action, the Irish Association to be in fact so united with the British as to be represented alike in its legislative and its executive body, in short that the union of the two should resemble the union of the two Kingdoms, there being a central National Legislature with its general executive representing both kingdoms, while each should have its separate Local Home Government, as Ireland at least has in the political administration of affairs.

To effect this it would be necessary, perhaps, to make

some changes in the constitution of both associations, introducing the principle of representation to a wider extent than at present, as might perhaps be effectively done by allowing all voting for officers to be carried on through the medium of the post; and we may remark that the necessities of executive administration render it so essential that the members of such executive should reside in the metropolis that there would probably be little change made in the present executive of either Association, while great moral weight would be added thereto by the introduction of the representative principle in its most extended and potent form. Each Association might then admittedly claim to express the voice of the profession in its own kingdom, and hence would address not only Boards, and the Legislature and Government, but even the profession itself with vastly increased authority. A basis for co-operation would then have to be considered, such that while each Association should retain its own internal organisation, and private management of matters properly called local, there might also be a possibility of conference, with not merely joint action, but unity of action, by means of selected representatives or plenipotentiaries, on all questions of common interest; such plenipotentiaries representing, by virtue of their *bonâ fide* election by the general voice, the general sentiment of the profession in both kingdoms; and the entire profession in both kingdoms undertaking accordingly to support, in a true spirit of discipline and subordination, the course indicated by the resolutions of these leaders whom they themselves should thus have appointed. It is obvious that immense weight and force would attach to any views put forward in this manner by a central executive constitutionally expressing the voice of the entire profession in the three kingdoms. For it must be remembered that in our profession, as well as in national politics, there are imperial as well as local interests; interests which can only be fitly handled, and to which due weight can only be given, by some central body which shall

represent not merely England, Ireland, or Scotland, but the entire United Kingdom expressing the general result of its united sentiment as one man by duly appointed representatives. Could a basis be devised for such a co-ordination of working force, we believe that the position of the profession in these kingdoms would be immensely strengthened, and that its weight would be of far greater moment in the councils of the State. This would not involve any rivalry between the two Associations, nor any change in the internal constitution or working of either. Each could still hold its separate annual meeting, and retain its own president, officers and council, as before; so that imperial organisation for imperial, or common and general, purposes, with local self-government, or Home Rule, now so much spoken of, for private or special purposes, would find a constitutional realisation within the precincts of our profession. But, reversing the Home Rule idea, we should hope that a perception ever strengthening in clearness and force, of the value and advantages of united action, together with a habit of so acting ever developing itself and becoming easier by custom, should ever draw the two Associations closer together in harmony of sentiment and community of purpose and action.

We should wish, as we have said, to see the great constitutional principle of electoral representation more fully, or we might say practically, carried out in both these Associations. We believe that it is a feeling of the want of this, a feeling on the part of each individual that he is practically powerless to give expression to his sentiments in the governing body, that leads to the formation of Associations which, though not designedly rivals of the pre-existing Associations are yet felt by them to be such; we say they are not designedly rivals of the older Associations, for the design and purpose of their existence is not such rivalry, but electoral representation; and were this principle more freely introduced, made more practically workable in the older Associa-

tions it would, we believe, render amalgamation so easy that Associations which now exist as separate, and apparently as rivals, should then exist as departments of one common organisation. In England a practical amalgamation of this sort has already been formed between the British Medical, and the Poor Law Medical Officers' Associations; and we believe that a similar amalgamation could be formed in Ireland, and with great and mutual advantage, if only the principle of representation were made effective, say by requiring the smallest possible amount of nomination for offices, as for instance a nomination by ten members in any part of the country, and after this allowing the greatest possible facility for electoral voting on such nomination, accepting voting papers, printed on a form or written by the member as might seem desirable, (why not the simplest and easiest, a signature could be attested by a witness if this were thought necessary?) such papers being allowed to be sent through the Post Office, instead of requiring the personal attendance of the voter. As we have above remarked this would probably involve very little change in the constitution of the executive body, since circumstances make it almost essential that all should reside in the metropolis; and only names of sufficient celebrity to be known not merely locally but through the whole country, would have any likelihood of receiving a sufficient number of votes to entitle them to office or to a seat on the Council. This system is thus quite analogous to what we have already proposed as a modification of the existing constitution of the Corporations, and is quite in accordance with the advance of popular principles of representation in the present day.

The Press organs of the Associations would afford every facility necessary for the effective working of such a system as far as communication from the centre to the extremities is concerned, while the Post Office would be the natural channel for return communications; the one thus representing an arterial, and the other a venous, system of intercommunication.

The Irish Medical Association would probably greatly increase both its numbers and its influence if, like its sister, it were to devote itself in part also to science. Let us suggest some such idea as the following, namely, that since the majority of practitioners find it extremely difficult to go to the capital even for a day, the day being definite and fixed, to attend the meeting of the Association, the Association should come to them as its British sister does. And in such meetings medical science might be discussed as well as medical politics. Indeed we do not see why *medical* science only should find a place at such re-unions. England has so many scientific workers in all departments that she can well afford a British Association for general science as well as a Medical Association for medical science. But in Ireland the medical men are almost the only national representatives of Science; and we can conceive nothing that would more tend to gather medical men together than a knowledge that at their re-union general science also should find a place. We believe that many members would thus be led to join the Association; and were the public admitted to the general science section, many subscriptions might thus flow into the coffers of the Association. We should propose that three sections should be formed, one for medical science, a second for medical politics, and a third for general science; and that, in addition to the annual meeting in Dublin, half-yearly meetings should be held in the various large towns of the provinces, one day for each meeting, with a public scientific meeting or soiree in the evening, as found so successful at the meetings of the British Association for the promotion of Science.

Provincial meetings might thus be held at Belfast, Londonderry, Galway, Limerick, Cork, and Waterford; or even smaller towns advantageously situated for railroad communication might be selected after these, the principal provincial towns, should have been visited in turn. Such railroad junctions as Portadown, Enniskillen, Athlone, and Limerick

Junction might perhaps be found thus advantageously situated. A President for the meeting might be selected from the medical men in the town visited, and also Presidents for each of the three sections represented, as done in the British Association, and British Medical Association in England.

The Poor Law Medical Officers' Association have, we believe, included this principle of representation from the first; and they are moreover in connexion with each other in the two kingdoms, though the circumstances of the services are very different; but, this being the case, there is this advantage in their co-operation, that their united strength will be employed to introduce the adoption in each service of the advantageous points belonging to the other, as well as many more at present not to be found in either, but which we may yet hope under improved professional conditions to obtain in both. We have already said that we hope ultimately to see an amalgamation of all rival professional associations into one organisation with different departments; we shall therefore proceed merely to discuss the work to be done on behalf of the Poor Law Medical Officer irrespective of the question by what organisation it is to be accomplished; only saying this much, that the Irish Medical Association has already laboured nobly in this field, and that we trust it will not under any circumstances intermit its most valuable exertions on behalf of the much oppressed Poor Law Medical Officer.

Perhaps the most important modification of the English Poor Law system, the one most to be desired alike by the medical officers and the recipients of medical charity, would be the introduction of the Irish system, by which the Guardians of the Union provide drugs for the dispensary. Already the metropolitan Poor Law dispensaries have adopted this system, and we hope ere long to see it enforced by law throughout the whole of the English service. The advantages of this to the poor are so great, and the disadvantages of the English system under which the medical officer has

also to supply drugs are so enormous, that it is only astonishing that the change has not long ere this been universally adopted. The poor man is undoubtedly entitled to the best medicines irrespective of cost, but as a general rule, under the English system, he can only expect the cheapest. This surely is a penny wise andpou nd foolish policy, even from the rate-payers' point of view. Again we would indicate as a desirable modification of the Irish system, the introduction of the English custom of paying extra fees for midwifery and operation cases; these cases always require extra time and care, and it is not reasonable that they should be included in the average of work. The exaction of responsibility from the doctor regarding them is unlimited, whether he be assisted by a midwife or no, and we have known a district where, had the doctor yielded to the demands made on him, he would have been asked to attend 400 cases of labour in the year, and required to sit for 24 hours on an average by the bedside of each in the easiest and most natural labour. By refusing to submit to such not merely preposterous, but obviously impossible demands on his time and strength, he no doubt ran the risk of dismissal at any moment, but he preferred, as all medical officers under such circumstances would do, nay, must do, even at the risk of dismissal, to devote his time to his fever cases and broken limbs, and to leave the physiological processes of Nature to shift for themselves. But by the introduction of the system of paying extra fees for such cases, in the first place their number would be kept down by the vigilance of guardians over the rates of the district, and in the second place if they did happen to overtask the doctor's strength, his fees would rise in proportion, so that he could pay for unlimited assistance from midwives or even medical men.

These improved conditions of labour in the Poor Law service we may expect to see adopted if we can so reduce our own numbers as to hold the command of the market in our own hands; but we may depend upon it that, in accor-

dance with the inexorable laws of supply and demand, the position of the service will never improve on either side of the channel so long as there are several candidates for each vacancy, or so long as even a sole resident practitioner has to undertake the dispensary work of the district at whatever he is offered for it for fear of the introduction of a rival. Not until he knows that no candidate will offer himself on such terms can he safely refuse them. And what terms are these which a man for fear of such competition dare not refuse? In Northumberland at this present moment one medical officer is paid £3 per annum for attending a district of nearly 12,000 acres; and another is paid £10 as surgeon to a workhouse, that of the Belford Union. Indeed, from £10 to £20 seems to be a very common salary for attending workhouses in Northumberlandshire. In some of these parishes the population is small, no doubt, but we find one gentleman paid £10 per annum for attending to a district of 8,000 acres, with a population of over 3,000, that is, less than one penny per head per annum, medicines included; no wonder we complain that the profession is overstocked. We have known a clergyman paid £400 a year for attending to the spiritual wants of a parish of 2,000 acres and a population of 100 souls. But the clerical is practically a close profession, that is to say, a man must have a named sphere of duty before he is admitted within it, while ours is an open one. There is, therefore, a great field open for the exertions of our Associations on behalf of the Poor Law Medical Officer as soon as we shall have made it possible for their exertions to tell by reducing our own numbers to such an extent as shall give us the control of the labour market of the profession. Farther, we trust that when that day comes we shall be able to have the Poor Law Medical Service constituted one of the departments of the Civil Service, and paid directly by the State, in England out of the Consolidated Fund, in Ireland out of the Church surplus, instead of being, as at present, in part paid by the Guardians; and also that a proper

superannuation allowance shall be granted to a man when age or infirmity incapacitates him from the efficient discharge of his duty, and that irrespective of his having served in one or more Unions. The locality of service makes a great difference when a retiring allowance has to be paid by the Union from which a man retires, when he may perhaps have served in more than one, but would make no difference whatever if it were paid directly by the State. And undoubtedly the State would gain in efficiency the full value of what it would cost to give a retiring allowance equivalent to what is given in the Civil Service to its old Medical Servants when no longer able to discharge their arduous and important duties.

Again, we have to protest against the whole system on which medical charitable relief is afforded under the Poor Law Acts. A ticket may be given to any "poor person," but it is entirely left to the donor or guardian to say who is a poor person and who is not. Accordingly, any shopkeeper's customer, any landlord's tenant farmer, any clergyman's pet, may obtain a ticket however well able to pay the doctor; and we have heard a farmer who had a nicely-furnished drawingroom, with a cottage piano in it, boast that he could get a ticket merely for the asking; we have known an engine-man in a channel steamer earning 35s. a week obtain a visiting ticket; we have known a parochial schoolmaster, who had also engagements as a visiting tutor in a country town, and whose emoluments apart from such earnings were calculated in the committee-room and found to be over £100 a year, given a visiting ticket by the good-natured rector, who said he thought the man a deserving man and he should like to do him a kindness; very good and charitable indeed, if it were done out of the rector's pocket, whose emoluments were about £1,200 a year for about a tenth part of the doctor's work, but very bad indeed and ill-done, when it was at the doctor's expense, and involved many visits from him at a distance in the country, he being

paid only £90 a year for all his laborious work and heavy responsibility. What is such administration of medical relief but dishonest imposition on the doctor on the one hand, and a ruinous subversion of manly independence and self-reliance, a fatal inculcation of the doctrine of the transfer of a man's private responsibilities to the State on the other; nothing short, in fact, of a forcing of pauperism on the country under the name of medical charity; and this, moreover, when the ordinary pauper relief is administered, and we will say wisely so, under a system which checks the supplementing of individual self-reliance by State relief until the last extremity of want is reached. It will be said, these people, though well-to-do, were not able to pay a fee of a pound to the doctor for a visit; to which, in the first instance, we reply that any doctor would have given three visits for a pound to people of their class, and secondly, that in the particular district we refer to, the doctor was known, both by the people and the committee, to be willing to accept 5s. for a visit from people of their means. No, we say the system is a gross abuse, and some means ought to be devised to check it.

We should propose that each Dispensary Committee should be required, at the commencement of each year, or on its own appointment after the 25th of March, to draw up a list, or to revise one already drawn up, of all householders within the district who should be considered entitled to medical relief, and a further list of persons who, though they should not be entitled to such relief for themselves or their families, yet might claim it for their servants; this provision would be necessary in order to include the large class of indoor farm-servants and house-servants among the respectable farmers of the country who might be expected to pay for themselves and their children. The medical officer should be furnished with a list of these persons, and might be required to attend them at the Dispensary without the presentation of a ticket, a ticket being, however, necessary as at present for a visit at

the patient's home. Any exceptional case, such as that of a recent arrival in the district of a person not living there at the time of the annual revision of the list, might be met by a provision permitting the insertion of an applicant's name on the list at any monthly meeting of the committee, or in case of more sudden emergency by a provision that the doctor should attend a person not previously a resident of the district on the presentation of a ticket signed by two guardians at least.

After this some means ought to be adopted of raising a barrier to, or instituting a check on, the indiscriminate insertion of names on this list, a check analogous in its working to that imposed on ordinary workhouse relief by the desire of the guardians to keep down the rates.

Each Union might be required to contribute to a Central Fund, a State Fund to pay for medical purposes without demand on the overburdened Consolidated Fund, a certain sum proportionate to the number of its population on its Medical Relief List, that is to say to the population whom the medical officer might be called on to attend by ticket. Out of this fund all medical salaries might be paid directly by the Local Government Board. In many Unions in Ireland, with numbers of wealthy farmers and shopkeepers resident in them, this list would at present include the entire population; but we suspect that a very considerable reduction in their numbers would very soon be made if each person on the list had to be paid for separately, whether he was actually attended or no. We would propose as a basis for such an estimate that the small sum of 6d. per head per annum of the numbers on the medical relief list be paid to this Central Fund for the salary and allowances of the doctor. Put in this light the sum of 6d. per head seems certainly ridiculously small, yet it is from 3 to 6 times the amount paid at present. It is a positive fact, ascertainable by any person by a few minutes calculation from the Union returns published in Churchill's Medical Directory, that

Poor Law Medical services are at present rendered in most places in Ireland as low as, nay even lower than, one penny per annum per head of the population liable to be attended.

What are the allowances we have spoken of a few lines above? There are none at present, but most undoubtedly there ought to be some as an addition to the medical officer's fixed and invariable salary.

One of the most satisfactory modes of increasing the salaries of the medical officers of dispensaries would be by means of a mileage allowance for distance actually travelled on dispensary business. In some of the gigantic districts of the west of Ireland, where the doctor has from 100 to 230 square miles of country under his sole charge, a visiting ticket implies a journey of 40 or 50 miles; a horse must always be kept by the doctor, often two; this causes a deduction of from £40 to £60 out of the £80 or £90 allowed him for doing the work, thus leaving him from £20 to £50 profit on the harassing and incessant work of these large districts, with exposure to every kind of weather by day and night. In fact his profit is not equal to that of a car-owner who has one, or two, horses, as the case may be, kept in constant work, nothing remaining over for the professional skill and services of the doctor, who however differs from the car-owner in having a profit so much the less, instead of the more, in proportion as he has to keep more horses to get his work done. No wonder that a visiting ticket should be looked on with horror in such places as these.

Now if the unfortunate doctor had the satisfaction of reflecting, as the coroner, a far less important functionary, has, that if the distance is far, and the journey laborious, at least it will be so much added to his scanty stipend; that every additional mile meant another loaf of bread for his children; that if he went 10 he might have a little meat to give them for their Sunday dinner; that 20 might get a pair of shoes for one of them, and that 50 meant an additional pair of blankets for them for the winter nights, he might

then bear up bravely under long and weary drives, or walks also when his horse could do no more, in the bitter winds and pelting rain or snow. But no, every additional ticket only means so much more expenditure of health and strength, so much more labour of his horse and himself, so much more wear and tear, without any additional or corresponding return. His skill being valued, after deductions, at £40 a year, he is allowed nothing whatever additional for his labour. The state to which a medical officer may thus be reduced in remote districts would hardly be believed. We take the following letter *verbatim* from the Irish Medical Association Journal of November 20th, 1872, quoted by that journal from the Ballina Herald; as the names have thus been already twice in print we feel no scruple in attaching them.

AN IRISH DISPENSARY DOCTOR'S WOES.

We quote from the *Ballina Herald* the following letter addressed by Dr. Kisby, Medical Officer of the Castlebar Dispensary, to his Board of Guardians:—

"Lahardane, October 15th, 1872.

"GENTLEMEN,—I feel obliged to acquaint you again of the very unpleasant and unbearable position in which I am trying to exist since my appointment as Medical officer to the Castlebar North Dispensary District since last March; and I now make this appeal to your honourable board in hopes that some means may be at once adopted to remedy my case. I am in a miserable abode, not much better than a cabin, with the rain water pouring down into the very beds of my family; the floor is of clay, which is, in consequence of the rain, quite damp, and boards are required to keep my boxes, beds, and other articles off the wet clay floor. As to my clothes, they are destroyed, being attached to damp walls. Most of my furniture is obliged to be stored in a farmer's house, and it would be utterly impossible to make even a

faint description of the despicable hovel in which the Medical man of the Castlebar North is expected to reside with a large family. Up to a few days past it was only through the kindness of a neighbouring farmer, that turned out his own cattle in order to provide me with a place for my horse—as, no matter how I am situated, there will be no allowance given if I for a moment happened to delay the attendance of a patient. In reference to a letter which I sent to your office some days past regarding the hardship of my being obliged to attend at Castlebar Dispensary once weekly, I must state that in my opinion it would be a great boon should the divisions of Addergoole and Ballynagorraher be put into the Ballina Union, as it is a most unreasonable thing that should I get a visiting ticket to the end of my district, an unfortunate person should be obliged to walk a distance of nearly 40 miles going and coming for such medicines as I might think fit to order; and I am often told by persons that it is a most grievous hardship. I have also to state that I have not received a single pound since I entered the district, as red tickets are given without the least distinction. I have applied to the Committee, but am told to bring in persons to prove my statements, as they refuse otherwise to cancel them. I wanted them to fix some limit, either as regards their valuation or otherwise, but do not expect any redress; and I venture to say my position is at present *the most pitiable of any dispensary doctor under the Poor-law service.* I apply to you in hopes of some redress.—I have, &c.,

"WILLIAM J. KISBY.

"The only remedy proposed by the Board of Guardians for this painful and disgraceful state of things is the resignation of Dr. Kisby."

Now we maintain that labour is a fair subject for remuneration as well as skill. We maintain that, the doctor's salary being so ridiculously low as compared with what is paid in the Church or at the Bar for the same amount of education

and labour, some mode of payment in proportion to the actual labour imposed on him ought to be adopted in addition to his fixed salary, his retaining fee for his skill.

Not only is this his just due, but the method we propose would in fact ensure a proportionate benefit to the district. For assuredly the medical officer would devote more and healthier energy to his daily visiting if he knew that for every additional case added to his labours he was adding a trifle, however small, to his wretched salary. To keep a second horse in this case would be worth his while; he could pay himself by the horse's work, and the district would get the benefit; but more than this, there would not be the same tendency on his part as now necessarily exists to regard his work as that which must be done merely as an *opus operatum;* he would come to have an interest in it as being compensated for any extra labour he might devote to it. We would suggest that the dispensary doctor should be paid 6d. a mile for every mile actually travelled on his work, a strict record being kept for inspection by the Committee of every visit paid on each day. A man might thus be able with one horse to add £80 a year, or with two, after deducting the extra cost of keeping the second, about £130 to his net earnings, the district getting the whole benefit of his extra exertions, and his net income being thus brought up to perhaps £200 a year, for daily, and nightly, labour all the year round, about equal to that which a barrister of probably no higher education gives for about the tenth part of this period in discharging the duties of Chairman at Quarter Sessions, and for which the said barrister will be paid £1,000 a year, besides being allowed to have his private practice in the capital during the remainder of the year.

It will be said there is no comparison between their respective positions. We know that; that is one of the things we protest against, that there is no comparison between their pay and their social positions, while there is a very fair comparison between the intellectual ability neces-

sary for the two posts, and between their education, both as regards extent and cost, and also between the importance of the functions of each to Society, while the weight of labour is so terribly against the doctor. But, it will be said, "the administration of justice is so far superior in importance to——." Yes, go on, why do you pause? You would say "to the saving of human life." "Well, that is not exactly the way to put it." "Well no, certainly not if you wish to prove your point; you mean that the functions of the assistant barrister are superior to those of the dispensary physician." Well, to ascertain the exact state of the case in this comparison we think we must compare their work hour by hour. The assistant barrister spends an hour in hearing a case in which the whole question is whether Joe struck Jim or Jim Joe first; the doctor spends the same hour in arresting flooding in a case of miscarriage; which has done the more important work for the individual or for society? The barrister spends the next hour in deciding whether Bill has any right to charge Tom that five shillings for goods said to have been supplied or no; the doctor spends the same hour, at the risk of his own life, by the bedside of a father of a family who is down in fever, and whom his assiduous care succeeds in saving. Which of these two hours has been employed in the more important work? The third hour the barrister spends in hearing a charge of stealing a fowl; the doctor spends it in setting a broken thigh; which is the higher function? The fourth hour the barrister spends on a case of trespass; the doctor devotes it to carrying a mother safely through her time of agony, and a babe through the most perilous hour of human existence. We do hold, indeed, that there is no comparison between the functions of the two as regards their importance whether to the individual or to society, but that it is the doctor who far outweighs the lawyer in the value of his services. But, it will be said, you have compared the doctor only with one of the minor functionaries of justice; look at the importance of the higher

administrators of the law, say one of Her Majesty's Judges of Assize, where the life of a criminal often depends on the clear-headedness of a judge. Look back, we say in reply, to such hours as those which not long since held all England breathless with suspense, when the most valuable life that England contained trembled in the balance, and depended, under God, on the clear-headedness and skill of the physicians, who were enabled, by unremitting and assiduous care in addition to their skill, to bring it back not only to a wife and children, but even to the whole nation mute with hourly expectation of the dreaded event.

It will be said that the safety of life and property depends on the administration of law in its entirety, or as a whole, however trivial the individual cases may be. True; and far be it from us to undervalue the services of the administrators of justice, or the importance of its administration, though comparing those of our own profession with them in importance, and contrasting them in the return awarded by society; and here we reply to this supposed overwhelming proposition that though it is undoubtedly true, yet, since we must also look at our profession as a whole, more life, and for that matter more property too, if labour and time are of value, are saved to the country in a year by the dispensary physicians of the country, thus excluding professional labour not paid for by the public, than would be lost in a dozen years if every administrator of the law from the highest to the lowest were laid asleep in the enchanted palace. The rough and ready Lynch law of the new Australian and American townships proves how readily, and with how little loss or inconvenience, society resumes to itself those functions of the preservation of life and property, and the punishment of crime, which it has delegated to the administrators of the law. The terrible black death, small pox and plague of the past centuries prove what society would revert to if medical skill and science, preventive and curative, were suppressed in their beneficial operations. No, the one difference is this, that barristers are few, and doctors are many,

and therefore the average estimate of the value, in money, of a doctor's time is small in comparison; and a great number of dispensary doctors must necessarily be employed, and therefore to pay a dispensary doctor as an assistant barrister is paid would make a larger gross demand on the public purse than anyone would consent to pay, at least as long as their services can be had for less, which, in consequence of their numbers, and the profession being an open one, is likely always to be the case; even though we may perhaps succeed in improving the present position.

One of the most important advantages to be gained as a consequence of having the Poor Law service constituted a distinct Civil department is that a certain amount of selection of candidates wishing to enter it would soon become possible by means of a departmental examination similar to that now held for the admission of candidates to the Medical Service of the Army, Navy, and Indian Civil and Military appointments. Why such an examination should not have been long since instituted is a mystery, but it undoubtedly indicates some defective appreciation on the part of the Administrative departments of the country as to one of the most essential conditions of national well-being. Is it possible that the lives of the natives of India are held of more account by our rulers than those of the natives of our own land? Is it possible that a medical man must not only have his regular diplomas, but must also prove by an examination at the India Office that he was fairly entitled to receive them, and that he is fully competent to take charge of life and limb, before he is allowed to practise on the humblest pariah of Her Majesty's Indian dominions, while yet any man, who, by a judiciously directed three months' cram, aided by the too facile complaisance of the examiners of some humble licensing Corporation, more eager for the profits of the candidates' fees than for the honor of their own diplomas, the welfare of their profession, or the health of the public, any man, we say, who may thus have succeeded in obtaining

a mere legal diploma, however humble or undeserved, may forthwith offer himself for the Poor Law service of this country, and, if he succeed in his canvass, through personal friendship or political or religious partisanship, for these are the true elements of success, not high skill, knowledge, or ability, of which the public know nothing, and are wholly incompetent to judge, why then, without any farther test by unbiassed examiners competent to decide these points, he may forthwith run a muck among Her Majesty's lieges, and maim or slay without let or hindrance. Surely if such an examination would somewhat add to the value of the individual Poor Law Officer's services, such increased value would be more than represented in the augmented benefit society would receive from the more skilled services of selected candidates. The establishment of such an examination ought to be one of the first objects of all our Medical Associations. Many young men wholly unfitted for the profession look upon these appointments as the foundation for a livelihood, to be eked out by the profits of drug-dealing, who under such a system of selection by examination for these Poor Law appointments would never contemplate entering the profession, and would cease to lower by their competition the salaries and emoluments, as well as the position, of their more highly educated brethren.

Let us go on to another point. It is commonly and popularly believed that a doctor's personal value rises greatly with his years and experience; so it does, if you compare him merely with himself; though it by no means follows that the younger man, taught the later advances of science, both medical and general, and instructed to use the more recent appliances, the microscope, the test tube, the thermometer, the ophthalmoscope, &c., may not be a much more reliable physician than the elderly consulting physician whom we have had to meet in consultation on fever, and who had never seen a clinical thermometer in his life till he saw it in our hand, or that other, whom we have also had to meet, who proposed to

bleed a patient in the coma of typhus, and who told us he was in the habit of estimating the specific gravity of urine by weighing a two-ounce phial full of it on a pair of letter-balances! Both these men were the leading consulting physicians of their respective large provincial towns, and possessed the confidence of the public over areas of thirty miles radius. But, nevertheless, be it freely admitted that the man of thirty years' experience is far superior to what he himself was thirty years, twenty years, or even ten years previously. And in private practice an increase of such practice pays him proportionately. Then why, if he is a Poor Law Medical Officer, is not his admitted increase of value to society recompensed by society by an increased rate of pay? Surely this would be only reasonable and just. In other departments of public service a man rises according to his length of service even apart from any presumption of additional skill acquired. In the Army and Navy the officers, combatant and non-combatant alike, gain promotion both in rank and pay by seniority. Similarly in the Civil Service. In the Church the curate looks forward to a parish. In the Constabulary the Sub-Inspector rises from class to class till he becomes a County Inspector. The poor dispensary doctor alone has no promotion, no increase of pay, no better sphere to expect. In the humble country district where his lot is first cast, there, in nine cases out of ten, he must expect to settle down and pass his humble life of unrecognised and unrecompensed utility. Surely this ought not so to be. Surely he ought at least to have the assurance that as he grows in years and experience, as his services become more valuable to society, so society will give an increased recompense for them, in the shape of a small annual increment to his humble pay, say £10 per annum, which is about the average of the rate at which a man's pay increases in the Army and Navy Medical Services, though there it does so *per saltum* after an interval of a few years, and not year by year. The dispensary doctor's position would thus be about

on a par as regards emoluments with that of a Civil Service Clerk, who does not do one half such arduous work, nor of any thing like equal importance, who has eighteen hours out of the twenty-four at his own absolute disposal, who has no expensive and protracted special education to undergo in order to fit himself for his post, and who, nevertheless, begins with £120 a year, and rises by regular annual increments to £300, £500, or £800. And when we shall thus have given the dispensary doctor a salary of £150 a year to commence with, and raised it during a thirty years' service to £450, and allowed him to add in each year £80 net, for mileage, or say, adding the keep of two horses, £150 gross, for this item, in all a charge of £600 a year as a maximum on a district of average size and population which shall have employed the services of the same man till he shall have become worn out in attending on them, to what amount of pay per head of the population to be attended, or of taxation per acre, does this extravagant salary amount? In a district of average size, say 36,000 acres, it would amount to 4d. per acre, or from 2d. to 4d. in the pound on the valuation; in a district of average population, say 12,000, it would amount to the munificent sum of one shilling per head per annum. Certainly when we consider how preposterously small such a sum appears in a contract for medical attendance during a whole year we must see that the only reason why £600 a year should appear unattainably large as a salary for a dispensary doctor of long service is that at present we are not accustomed to it. We feel as if we might exclaim with Gray's bard looking into futurity "Visions of glory, spare my aching sight;" but only because the future has not yet become the present. Shall it yet do so? Can a prospect in any degree approaching this be yet in store for the hard-working and underpaid dispensary doctor? It may. It will if we in earnest bestir ourselves.

In answer to all this it will no doubt be said "The doctor adds to his Poor Law emoluments his earnings by

private practice." We reply first, that we have shown above that too often he adds nothing from this source, or at least a mere trifle, all those who ought to pay being freely given charitable medical relief; secondly, even if he did it is nothing to the purpose; it has nothing whatever to say to the question whether he is paid as he ought to be by the country for his work as a dispensary physician. Such a consideration is not allowed to interfere with the pay of the assistant barrister who has his metropolitan practice when not sitting as chairman of his county; rather the fact that his public duties take him away from his private practice is made the grounds of paying him handsomely for his judicial functions. No; there is an answer, and, we regret to say, a true one; and that is this, "We can get men to work for this amount, why should we pay them more?" To this there is no reply. Were we on a Board of Guardians, with the interests of our own pockets to be consulted, we should probably use this same argument if pressed for a salary higher than the market rate. In fact it is an inevitable one; and the only answer to it is the practical one; namely, so to cut off the supply of men that they shall *not* be procurable at such salaries. But for doing this, we, the working members of the profession, must, alike in honesty and in policy, compensate the Licensing Corporations, and the Educational Institutions where necessary.

In the Clubs, similarly, it seems preposterous that an artizan earning at the rate of from £2 to £3 weekly, and probably spending the half of it in intoxicating liquors, should pay a medical man 3s. 6d. for a year's attendance on himself, or his friend if he chooses to require it. In Australia at this present moment Club-payments are 25s. per annum, nor is there any reason why they should not be so here except that medical men are so numerous here that if one refuse the smaller sum a dozen will eagerly stretch out their hands to accept it.

Let us come at last to consider the mode in which, the

Corporations and Schools having been secured by the Profession at large against any consequent loss, the number of entrants into the profession might be so effectually reduced as to bring about, in the course of a few years, the desirable state of things we have above depicted. Now in endeavouring thus to reduce the excessive numbers that overweight our profession, and to change it from an open one to, not exactly an absolutely close one, but one surrounded by barriers hard to pass, there are one or two principles which we should desire to keep in view. The first of these is that we ought not to aim at raising these barriers by means of pecuniary obstacles; some addition to the expensiveness of a medical education may incidentally be made, but such addition ought not to be our object, as thus we might lose talent, which would otherwise adorn our profession, merely on account of the casual co-existence therewith of straitened circumstances. Besides, we hold it a principle that to talent, however humble, there ought to be as little hindrance, and as much help, as possible, given in making its way to a pre-eminence corresponding with the ability which the Almighty has been pleased to bestow; we will say with the nobility, for the man of intellect is the God-given leader of men, and certain loss and detriment must accrue to that nation which sends intellect into the ranks, and calls upon birth or wealth, privilege or prejudice, to lead whithersoever their own interests call them.

Secondly,—The element of time is one that we need not fear to introduce into the sum of circumstances that may influence candidates to choose some other walk of life rather than this.

Thirdly,—We need not fear that, in seeking the advantage of our profession, the consideration of which, and that only, is the prescribed purport of our present essay, we are thereby seeking the disadvantage of the public. For, as regards their health, if we can make the rewards and emoluments of the profession better than they are at present, we thereby attract

a superior class of talent to its ranks; and though we could hardly secure higher ability than that possessed at present by the leaders of the profession, yet there can be no doubt that the rank and file might be much improved in this respect; and if we insist on a higher culture, and more thorough knowledge of the profession, we thereby directly advance the interests of the public as regards their health. Neither as regards their purse can any reasonable objection be made to our limitations, for we have repeatedly shown that an increase of the physician's emoluments, from private practice, is to be looked for more in the direction of an increase in the number of his patients, from the removal of competition, than in the fees to be received from any one patient, and this for the obvious reason that the amount of these fees is regulated, where common principles of honesty influence the patient, not so much by the number of physicians who might be the recipients thereof, as by the character or severity of the ailment for which each patient, according to his wealth or his fears, thinks it worth his while to call in advice. Of course, Lady H—— Skinflint could no longer bow a physician out of her drawing-room without his fee after she had sent for him, if she knew that she had no one but him to rely on in her next emergency; but we only refer to cases in which the ordinary principles of honour and honesty have more weight than that "*auri sacra fames*" which prompts the saving of an occasional well-earned guinea, at the cost of any amount of principle or reputation. In public taxation, no doubt, there would be some increase for medical salaries, but we conceive that a proportionate saving, or more, would be found, ere long, to accrue in the improvement of public health, and the reduction of the Poor Rates; and this argument, that a more liberal expenditure in the department of medical relief would be certain to result in a diminished expenditure in the direction of pauper relief, is, we think, quite a sufficient answer to those who would object to any centralisation of taxation for medical purposes, and of payment therefor, on the

ground that a local control is necessary to secure economy of working and administration. Doubtless, where laxity of administration as regards economy has a tendency to encourage and increase the very evil it is meant to relieve, as in the administering of pauper relief generally, too great strictness can hardly be practised ; but, on the other hand, where too great penuriousness has a tendency to foment the evil it is designed to check, as in sanitary measures, and the providing of the best medical aid under the circumstances and conditions which shall ensure its most effective and energetic working, there the administration had better be taken out of the hands of those whose sole end and object is the cheapest administration consistent with their absolute obligations, rather than that administration which shall prove of the greatest and most lasting benefit.

The considerations above mentioned point out conclusively that it is in the direction of increased requirements, strictness and severity in the educational course, both professional and preliminary, that we must work if we would remove the excessive competition which at present destroys our profession.

Now, having above proposed a method by means of which the pecuniary vested interests of our Licensing Corporations and recognised Schools may be preserved, as is only just, fair and right, at the expense of the profession at large, we have no scruple in proposing, on the other hand, sweeping measures in the interest of the profession, which would otherwise be at the expense of the Corporations, but against the loss involved in following which, they would, by the above method, be protected. Indeed, we may remark, *en passant*, that the prestige of some of them would hereby be greatly increased.

We have to consider the preliminary as well as the professional examinations.

It will readily be seen that the object and design of these two classes of examination are very different. The prelimi-

nary examinations are intended to test the brains—the intellectual power—the capacity for assimilating scientific facts and principles—the power of appreciating scientific methods, and withal, the diligence of, and the habits of study acquired by, the candidate. And the intellectual power and tastes ought obviously to be tested principally in the direction in which they must afterwards be exerted, nay, we will say, strained, in medical studies and practice. The man who proposes to ascend Mont Blanc will do well to try his powers on Snowdon first. Further, the preliminary examination is intended to guarantee that the candidate, if he goes out on the world as a medical man, shall not there disgrace his profession in the eyes of educated men, and as compared with the other learned professions, by his ignorance of anything that all gentlemen ought to know. We should not wish to see a medical man who could not write an ordinary letter without making half-a-dozen mistakes in orthography. We should not wish to see a physician, whose very name of physician implies that he is supposed to be a student of Nature, φυσις, obliged to sit silent at the table of his patients when any subject of science may happen to be broached; nay, rather we would wish that he should be able to make himself respected and looked up to, wherever he may be placed, as being the authority on all such subjects. True, we cannot expect boys to be possessed of the knowledge of men, but we can ascertain that they have the capacity for the study of science, both exact and inductive; for if they have it not they must be incapable of studying, or scientifically practising, medicine, which is science in her least exact and most Protean form; and we are able to make sure that they possess the tastes, and have acquired the habits of thought which will enable them to study medicine in the present, and to further advance their scientific studies in the future.

Now, while we admit that a scientific and versatile, and withal a strict, examiner might ascertain nearly all that we have proposed in the case of a candidate coming up even for

the small modicum of a classical and mathematical course now permitted, if only some subjects of physical science were added thereto, still we must assert that the preliminary examinations are, in many cases, not framed with a view to this desirable end; and further, that the examiner is forbidden to utilise for this end, even as far as he might, the course he is given for examination. Should he attempt to do so, the Corporation will very effectually prevent any repetition of a strictness so perilous to their pecuniary interests—viz., by removing him from his post of examiner at the next election. Nor can we blame them for this under present circumstances and exigencies, though we think that a change in such circumstances and a removal of such exigencies are possible, as above proposed, by a vigorous and united action on the part of the profession at large. But the condition to which preliminary examinations have been reduced by these present circumstances and exigencies is, indeed, lamentable. The question is not who may fairly be rejected, but who can, by any possible stretch of laxity, be got through; and thus, writing from dictation is little better than a mere test of penmanship, for the examiner will sometimes actually aid the assembled candidates in the orthography and punctuation; while the proposal that a short essay should be written, on any the simplest subject that the candidate may himself select, is met by a protest, equivalent to a prohibition, from the other examiners, that it need not be attempted, since the candidates would be utterly unequal to the arduous task. Yet, let us ask, since words are the medium of ideas, and sentences of propositions, how is such a candidate to acquire any clear and definite conception of the nature and diagnostic characters of any case that he may have to investigate if it is to be taken as an undeniable proposition that he is unable to reduce to writing his own ideas on the simplest subject?

Again, take the mathematical part of the course presented for the preliminary examination. It is held to be sufficient that a candidate shall be able to put down, from memory,

the terms of a geometrical proposition, with letters in definite positions on the figure, just as he learned it off by rote from the village schoolmaster, or the, perhaps still less efficient, Academy grinder. But ask that he shall understand the meaning of what he is saying—that he shall comprehend the theorem stated, rather than merely remember the words in which it is stated; put the self-same proposition before him in terms slightly different from those to which he is accustomed, or ask him to state and prove it himself in general terms, and thus endeavour to ascertain whether he comprehends a statement, or merely recollects a formulary—whether he has grasped a principle, or only remembers a rhythm—and he will complain that he is being unfairly tested, and will probably find that the Corporation also will protest, and that effectually, against the unreasonableness of the examiner. What shall we say of the classical portion of the examination? We have known men come up actually unable to read Greek, actually unacquainted with the letters of the Greek alphabet, who yet, through the facilities afforded by a mere *vivâ-voce* examination, aided by the facile assistance of the examiners, who knew what was expected of them, or who, if inclined to more strictness, were rigidly over-ruled by their colleagues at the final summing up of marks, were yet able to make their way through into the study of a profession in which the very terms they must meet in every lecture and manual would be to them in an unknown language. Is it too much to expect that young men of 18 or 19 years of age, who propose to enter one of the learned professions, should have devoted 5 or 6 years to general education, in the direction of the preliminary examination, before they come up to enter upon such an arduous study as that of medicine? Previous to entering a university young men spend 8 or 10 years at school, and certainly the matriculation, or preliminary examination, for the medical profession, ought to imply no less education than the matriculation examination of a university; rather, we should say, a great

deal more, since it is a matter of presumption that general education has nearly ended for those who are now to devote their energies to a special pursuit, while for university students in Arts, their general education is often only about to begin, at least in the direction of science. Or, if young men coming up to study medicine have actually spent 6 or 8 years in study, is it unreasonable to expect of them the possession of so much brains as shall enable them, after all these years of study, to have acquired something more than the knowledge of a parrot and a rhymster for so limited a course. Or, let us ask, is it a good lesson to teach these young men at the very commencement of their medical studies, that "cramming" and "fluking" may succeed at an examination, and save the trouble of study and application. Yet we are aware of cases in which young men, absolutely ignorant of the merest rudiments of education, have passed these barriers by force of cramming and audacity. We have heard of such a case as this :—A young man who had never opened a book, as the saying is, on the subject of the preliminary examination, being crammed for a week in the opening page of St. John's Gospel, learning off by rote two or three propositions in Euclid, deliberately requesting the examiner to take him in these portions of the course, and coming off with flying colours for the present at least, but with a lesson taught him as to the relative value of work and cramming, which he would not readily unlearn, and the bad effect of which must have radiated far and wide among his emulating class-fellows.

We would fain see a system adopted, both in classics and science, which should absolutely put an end to such imposition, a system which, while allowing a candidate considerable latitude in his studies, such of them at least as might be considered optional, should yet rigidly test his accurate and sufficiently extensive knowledge of all that was essential, and of any optional subjects that he might himself select, so that none should pass this first barrier without having given

sufficient proof alike of capacity and of diligence in study; for we think that it is here principally, in the preliminary examination, that the barriers should be raised for the purpose of limiting the numbers and improving the quality and social status of the profession; here while a young man has still time and opportunity before him to try some easier sphere, requiring less intellectual power, should he fail in this, which we cannot but regard as an arduous walk of life, if indeed it is to be trodden as it ought to be. Many other spheres there are which can be adequately filled by men possessing a mere fraction of the brains and education necessary for the medical profession. We will not say that a man can rise to eminence in any sphere without brains and good cultivation thereof; but we cannot but think that clerkships in the Civil Service, or in business, the non-scientific branches of the Army Service, now thrown open to competition, the clerical profession in the various denominations, the management of a farm, and commercial engagements, are all of them occupations not requiring, even for the very satisfactory discharge of their duties, either intellectual grasp or special scientific study at all comparable to what is absolutely necessary for the successful prosecution of the study of disease as required for the satisfactory discharge of the duties of even the humblest position of responsibility in the Medical Profession, even for the undertaking of the duties of a Poor Law Medical Officer, engaged as he is in the terrible responsibilities of a daily combat, hand to hand, with disease and death—where health, life, and limb depend on his knowledge of scientific facts, his well-trained powers of quick observation and rapid intuition, his capacity for scientific induction, his appreciation of scientific theory, and his experienced application thereof to scientific practice; and it is here, at his preliminary examination, that his capacity in these respects is to be ascertained, if ever at all. For if it be not ascertained here, then, during the whole of the student's subsequent special professional study, whether in the

hospital, laboratory, school, or lecture-room, the teacher may, perhaps wholly unawares, perhaps most painfully aware of it, be fruitlessly endeavouring to make a pint measure contain a quart, or, worse still, repeating the labours of the daughters of Danaus on a skull of cribriform structure and imperfectly-closed foramina.

We repeat that it ought to be made a matter of certainty that any man who shall have passed the preliminary examination shall have given proof alike of capacity and of diligence sufficient to ensure his passing his professional examinations at the due period, as they occur in his medical course. This would save many regrets and much loss of time to the student, who never ought to have proposed such studies to himself, but who now laboriously goes on, year after year, till he at last manages, by a combination of cramming and luck, to slip through the final goal, only to bring down on the heads of his unfortunate patients the results of that mistake in his choice of a profession, which ought to have been unfailingly detected and ruthlessly demonstrated at his first attempt to carry it into practice at his preliminary examination.

And in order that this mistake may be thus demonstrated, and the incapable or idle student turned back from the barrier ere yet he has committed himself to a start for the goal, ere yet he can be laid open to the disgrace of failure, or, worse still, succeed only to the disaster of his future patients, we should decline to trust the testing of his capacity to any other than a professional body fully competent to ascertain his competency; or, if delegated to a university, or to the College of Preceptors, the course and nature of the examination ought to be definitely laid down by the General Medical Council, and a certificate required from the examining body that the candidate had passed the special examination in the definite course so prescribed by the Council. For what guarantee of capacity for the study of medicine is given by a student passing, say, at the Oxford Responsions, at which

theology forms the principal part of the examination, and physical science is nowhere; or, let us say, by the entrance examination in Trinity College, Dublin, an examination very well suited, no doubt, for its intended purpose—namely, to ascertain whether a young man has already progressed far enough in his studies to fit him to receive further instruction in classics and mathematics at the university, but having very little bearing on the question whether he is fit to study medicine or investigate disease; and when we consider on what very mediocre answering a lad is allowed to pass this entrance examination, we are forced to repeat our opinion that no mere general examination, designed for other purposes, ought to be held sufficient for matriculation in medical studies, but that a special examination ought to be required to be held by each body proposing to satisfy the Licensing Corporations of the fitness of the candidate for these studies, and that the subjects examined in thereat ought to be those specially prescribed by the General Medical Council for that purpose. We say by the General Medical Council, because we have to treat of the minimum qualification; and, moreover, the student really has not passed within the cognisance of the Corporations until this examination shall have been passed; but we should hope, ere long, to see the different Corporations vying with each other in requiring, each for its own licence, a standard a good deal higher than that prescribed by the General Medical Council, as the lowest receivable by any.

Some Corporations, as, for instance, the University of London, already require a much higher preliminary standard, and we would hope that ere long all may do so, their pecuniary interests being carefully secured by their respective licentiates. Until such an arrangement shall have been made, we can only hope that the Corporations will do what they can on behalf of the interests of the profession, but we must fairly admit that we cannot expect them to ruin themselves for our benefit. We would ask them to propose to their re-

spective licentiates such an arrangement as we have indicated above, and then it will depend on the profession itself whether it will raise itself or no. "Who will be free, themselves must strike the blow."

But, when such an arrangement shall have been effected, what will be the class and nature of the studies which it may be desirable to propose as a satisfactory test of a candidate's ability to study medicine, in the first place, and to practise it, in the second, and, let us say, in the third place, to maintain his position and the dignity of his profession in the world as a gentleman, a man of scientific education, and a member of a profession in no respect inferior in its learning, or at this future time to be held inferior in its recognised social position to either the Bar or the Church? We may classify the studies desirable for these ends under five heads —namely, English, Classics, Exact Science, Physical Sciences of Nature, Biological Science. The first two are necessary for the educated gentleman, and as instruments for further studies; the next two are necessary for the physician and surgeon as a scientific man; the last comprises sciences generally considered to belong to his special professional studies, such as Botany, Zoology, Comparative Anatomy; indeed we might include Physiology in this group. The subjects of this last class are, indeed, so universally recognised as being strictly professional that we need hardly urge anything further from this point of view, though we may have something to say as to the period of the medical course at which they ought to be introduced. As to the others, about which there has hitherto been no such agreement of opinion, we are yet able to say that, nevertheless, by one or other of the Licensing Bodies studies in all these classes of subjects have been recognised as being suitable for the tests to which the preliminary examination is intended to subject candidates.

Thus English is specially indicated for the Examination in Arts of the London Society of Apothecaries, and by English

this worthy Corporation, which has done so much to advance and improve the general and professional education of the general practitioner, does not mean merely writing a passage from dictation, but specifies, "The English Language, the leading features of its history, its structure and grammar, and English composition," and recommends such books as "Adam's Elements of the English Language," and "Trench on the Study of Words." Certainly this is a step in the right direction; and, if the examination is conducted with anything approaching to reasonable strictness, will have a most beneficial influence in weeding out those aspirants to the profession who will never be either a credit to it or a satisfaction to their patients. The College of Surgeons of England requires "a short English composition, such as a description of a place, an account of some useful or national product, or the like." This also is a most valuable innovation, and one we should wish to see adopted at the Irish College, since nothing more tests a man's real capacity of mind than his power of putting down his ideas clearly, concisely, and consecutively, on paper. The College of Physicians of London conforms certainly to the requirements of the General Medical Council in requiring that an examination in General Education shall have been passed, but specifies nothing whatever of the nature thereof, or of the subjects to be comprised in it.

Again, the Scottish Licensing Bodies unanimously place the subject of Natural Philosophy (meaning thereby some departments of Mathematical Physics, as Mechanics, Hydrostatics, &c.), in a list of subjects, out of which two must be selected by each candidate for the Examination in Arts, in addition to the compulsory subjects, those in the optional list being of higher grade as tests of ability and scientific capacity than the compulsory, which are more elementary.

As regards classics, Latin is, of course, regarded as essential by all Licensing Corporations; yet, we regret to say, that the proficiency required is little more than nominal;

that is to say, that although a fair number—much the larger proportion—of the candidates will evince a fair knowledge of the language, yet that, say, the lower third of those passed will have exhibited a very lamentable ignorance of it. And we repeat that, at University examinations students will be allowed to pass who have exhibited a similar ignorance, and, therefore, these examinations ought not to be accepted, under any reformed *regime*, as demonstrating a sufficient acquaintance with this essential branch of preliminary education to permit of the student entering on a course of medical study. For the knowledge of Latin which may do very well for University students who only care to escape plucking, or for the country farming gentry and hunting squireens of Bœotia-shire, is not a sufficient basis of classical knowledge for a man who shall have to live by his brains in the practice of one of the learned professions, nor would such a knowledge qualify him to read the literature of the profession with any intelligent apprehension of its meaning. This remark, indeed, we may also make about Greek, which, notwithstanding the recommendation of the General Medical Council, that it shall be made compulsory, we still find in the optional list of all the Scotch Licensing Bodies, without exception. The College of Physicians of London fails to prescribe any definite course either in classics or any other branch of preliminary education; and the London College of Surgeons and Dublin College of Physicians recognise any examination passed before any other Licensing Corporation whatsoever. The Dublin College of Surgeons makes Greek compulsory, but we fear we must say that the examination therein is too lax to test the candidates' knowledge satisfactorily, as well as for the interests of the profession at large.

An easy course in the exact sciences is deemed essential by nearly all the Licensing Bodies; but the Edinburgh College of Physicians relegates this important instrument of mental training to the list of optional subjects.

It appears, therefore, to be recognised that the classes of

subjects we have above enumerated are the most suitable, as well for training as for testing the ability and scientific capacity of young men who propose to study medicine. But we regret that circumstances at present prevent the carrying out of such a curriculum to the extent that would be desirable. We propose, however, to consider what extent would be desirable, in the hope that these circumstances may ere long be removed.

Let us turn to the regulations of the University of London. We there find the following rule regarding the matriculation examination:—"Candidates shall not be approved by the Examiners unless they show a competent knowledge in—1. Classics (this includes Greek, as well as Latin); 2. The English Language, English History, and Modern Geography; 3. Mathematics; 4. Natural Philosophy; 5. Chemistry; 6. Either the French or the German Language." This well drawn up and satisfactory course (for there is no laxity of examination here) is, be it observed, wholly independent of the preliminary scientific examination, which must be passed at least a year before proceeding to the first M.B. Examination, the Matriculation Examination being required to be passed before even commencing medical study. And this Preliminary Scientific Examination adds Mechanical Philosophy, Botany and Vegetable Physiology, Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, and a severer course in Inorganic Chemistry, to the list of subjects of preliminary education; the Examinations being conducted both *vivâ voce* and by printed papers—in Chemistry by experiment, and in the Biological Sciences by demonstration from specimens. Candidates are required to show a competent knowledge in all the subjects of the examination. At last, therefore, we find a Licensing Body determined that those who wear their honors shall be thoroughly educated and scientific gentlemen as well as medical men. And we would gladly hold up this examination as a mark to be aimed towards; and perhaps in years to come, when the limitation of numbers

shall have made the profession a worthy object of ambition to men of high talent in numbers sufficient to supply the country, as well as the metropolis, then, we say, such a standard may, perhaps, be attained in all the Corporations. At present we would only indicate what is desirable in the interests of the profession at large.

We have remarked above that boys cannot be expected to possess the knowledge of men ; though, indeed, young men of eighteen years of age ought, after six or eight years of school training, to be something more than mere boys as regards mental development and educational knowledge. But we must add that in most country localities there are no opportunities for acquiring such a knowledge of science as we should wish to see required in the preliminary examinations. Classics are taught in our Grammar Schools, but English is neglected; Mathematics are introduced in a subordinate position, but the Physical and Natural Sciences, the very essence of the scientific progress of this nineteenth century, are ignored; nor will you find, in almost any school, masters competent to teach even the merest smattering of any subject included under these heads. What, therefore, are we to do if we require, as we ought to do, and as we hope to see done, a knowledge, sound at least, if slight, of these subjects as a preliminary to medical studies? And we ought so to require it; for these sciences are essentially the sciences of induction and generalisation, essentially the sciences which teach a man how to observe that which lies unheeded before the eyes of the world, and how to build secure conclusions on observations of fact, and on premises which the mere mathematician would designate as inexact, forgetting, perhaps, that all exact science is based on hypothesis, and that Nature gives us, not hypotheses, but facts, few and far between it may be, to observe, and requires us, on such observations, to arrive at the best conclusions we can ; and, certainly, such facts, such observations, such processes of induction, constitute the essential work of the scientific physician and surgeon,

and conclusions analogous to those arrived at in the physical and natural sciences, and arrived at by the same routes, constitute his best results.

It would seem to us that, in order to overcome the difficulty of obtaining scientific teaching in the country, and yet at the same time to secure that a satisfactory knowledge of science shall be attained by the candidate for medical studies at an early part of his course, it might be desirable to divide the examination in preliminary education into two parts, the first comprising such subjects as a young man might be reasonably expected to have learned at school, and constituting the Matriculation Examination, to be brought up in extent and strictness, at least, to the requirements of the General Medical Council; the second comprising a farther set of subjects, some of those at present included in the professional course being included, and with these some others specially designed first to train, and, having tried to train, next to test, the candidate's capacity for the further pursuit of his arduous choice of the most scientific of all professions—that one which requires the widest knowledge of science, that one on which a larger number of sciences bear than on any other, that one in which the scientific method and capacity are of most importance. In the first examination, then, we would require a knowledge of Greek and Latin sufficient to allow the medical man to pass muster among educated professional men afterwards, as having received the education of a professional gentleman, an education which may be procured at any ordinary Grammar School throughout the country; nay, in most towns from private classical teachers. Say that he should be required to translate passages from three or four Latin and as many Greek authors, and to show his knowledge of these languages by making out the meaning of some easy author at sight. In addition to this, English, orthography, with some knowledge of the language, such as is required by the English Society of Apothecaries as above-mentioned, and the writing of a short essay on a simple

subject. Further, Geometry, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th books of Euclid, to be done in such a way, say in general terms, as shall show that the candidate understands the meaning of the theorems, and has not merely learnt them off; also Algebra as at present to the end of simple equations; a mathematical course that a lad might easily study with the assistance of the nearest National schoolmaster.

Having thus been permitted to matriculate as a medical student, we should propose that his first year's work should be devoted to the study of Physical and Natural Sciences in the metropolis in, say, the following subjects:—1st. Mathematical Physics, *i.e.*, Mechanics, Hydrostatics, and Optics, all of which have a direct bearing on his future professional studies, as every bone, muscle, and joint is an illustration of mechanical principles, and all the fluids of the body move under the laws explained by hydrostatics, while the eye absolutely requires a knowledge of the laws of optics to comprehend its structures and functions. A three months' course of lectures on each of these subjects would bring a young man through the whole in the first year's winter and summer sessions. In addition to this, Chemistry and Chemical Physics, meaning thereby the subjects of Heat and Electricity, and we should wish to add Light and Sound, treated from the physical and experimental, rather than the mathematical point of view; these ought to be made subjects of the first year's study; and with these, Botany in the summer session. Further, Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, and also Physiology, ought then to be taken up, and would give an introduction to the further and more exact study of the human frame in subsequent years. We should also strongly recommend the study of Physical Geography and Meteorology as bearing intimately on the subjects of Climatology, Hygiene, distribution of disease, and sanitary science generally, a class of subjects daily becoming of more and more importance both to the public and to the profession. The above subjects, it will be seen, are not directly, but only indirectly, connected

with the professional course; they are subjects with which every young man would do well to make himself acquainted, even if not designed for the medical profession. And should the candidate fail to pass the strict examination which ought to be held in them at the close of the first year, and which ought to be considered an essential preliminary to obtaining credit for the strictly professional lectures and other business of the second year, he would go out on the world for some other walk in life, much the better for the year so spent in endeavouring, even though in vain, to gain access to the medical classes. Nay, more, if lecturers on these subjects were appointed by the various teaching bodies, and their courses thrown open to the public on payment of the class fee, such is the desire of the more advanced and earnest young men of the day to become acquainted with these subjects, that many would join the classes who had no intention of subsequently going on with medical studies.

In addition to these preliminary scientific studies, we should think it desirable that the first year's student should attend the practice of a General Hospital. The hours for visiting, at least in Dublin, are such as not to interfere with any other work of the day, and by the diligent use for nine months of these morning hours the first year's man could obtain a very good general idea of the main features of cases, both surgical and medical, and become tolerably well acquainted with the meaning of terms, whereby he would be much better fitted to understand and mentally assimilate his clinical and school lectures in his second year. We think that he might also, without undergoing more than the ordinary work of a medical student, attend the School Demonstrations and Dissections, not taking a subject for himself perhaps, but reading for some more advanced student, and thus not only gaining a general knowledge of junior anatomy, but also learning what is to be done in dissection, and how to do it. He might make the bones a special subject of study during the first nine months,

partly because this branch can be studied without actual dissection or the taking of a subject, and independent of attendance in the school; partly because this will give him a solid foundation on which to build his subsequent anatomical studies when he comes to dissection for himself; and further, because the study of the bones of the human frame is intimately connected with, and throws much light on, the study of Comparative Anatomy, which we have proposed as one of the scientific studies of the first year's student. We should, accordingly, propose to add an examination in the Bones to the Preliminary Scientific Examination to be undergone at the close of the first year.

Definitely then to tabulate the first year's work, let us put down the following courses of lectures and subjects of study for the Winter Session in the first place :—

Hospital Practice, two hours daily; Anatomical Demonstrations and Attendance in the Dissecting Room, two hours; Chemistry, Mathematical Physics, Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, Physiology and General Anatomy, one hour each. This would make eight hours of work, a good and useful day, but not, we hope, too much, since we think that the hours at present devoted to the private tutor's instructions in the evening by senior students would be out of place at this period of the student's career, and might be much better spent otherwise, say, in looking over his own lecture notes of the day. We are far from undervaluing the services of the private teacher, but we think that the first year's student does not know enough for the public class, as it is called, and that if he avails himself of the private teacher's aid in his first year it ought to be in a private class, carefully studying the bones at a private demonstration, which can be accomplished as effectually at his teacher's house as at the school. In the Summer Session we would propose the following course and work :—Hospital attendance as before; Demonstrations in Histology, a much neglected, but important, branch of scientific work, to take the place of Anatomical Demonstrations

at the school; Lectures on Mathematical Physics (say, Optics, the other branches, Mechanics and Hydrostatics, having been disposed of in the Winter Session), Chemical Physics, Botany, Physical Geography, and Meteorology, one hour each. Farther private studies in the Bones at the student's option, but strongly to be recommended in view of the examination therein. In all these subjects we would most strongly urge on the student the habit and practice of taking careful, copious, and accurate notes of the lectures. No more valuable habit can be acquired for the training of the mind than that of making an abstract of, and putting down in the student's own words what he has heard the lecturer say. There will, doubtless, be some trouble at first in acquiring the power of following with the pen or pencil a sentence or two behind the lecturer, as also in condensing into the smallest possible shape the essence and pith of what he has said, so as to allow of its being put on paper in the time it takes him to say it, for, as an element in mental training, we by no means recommend the use of shorthand and verbal following of the lecturer; the value of the note-taking principally consists in the making of the condensed abstract; and the value, for purposes of subsequent study, of a body of notes actually the fruit of the student's own intellectual powers, and therefore capable of ready reassimilation on subsequent perusal, cannot be over-rated. The habit of putting one's own ideas on paper is thus greatly strengthened, and preparation will thus be made for case-taking in hospital and in subsequent practice.

A strict examination in all the subjects above enumerated ought to conclude the first year; and in awarding marks at such examination we should suggest that the candidate might be required to produce his lecture note-books, and that a high per centage of the examination marks should attach to these books according to the style in which they should be found to have been kept. It will be said that some unscrupulous students would copy the note-books of their more able and

diligent fellow-students. We hope not; and we hardly think so; it is not so easy as might be supposed thus to copy blindly the productions of another man's mind, unless the notes should have been very admirably taken indeed. Besides the student should be liable to be questioned *vivâ voce* on his own notes. But in any case this fraud might easily be prevented by the lecturer initialling the note-books of his class at the end of each day's lecture, the books being then deposited with him till the next day. Two or three minutes would do this for a large class, and the time would be well spent thus, as it would ensure the earnest attention of each student to the lecture, a matter at once most important, and admittedly most difficult to secure.

Let us now proceed to consider the studies of the second year. The Hospital attendance ought of course to extend over the entire nine months of the Winter and Summer Sessions as before. A full course of Anatomical Dissections and Demonstrations ought now to be taken out, the student's attention being still directed principally to the Junior Anatomy, in which alone he ought to be required to pass at the end of this year. And in truth two years' dissections is not enough to make a man a good Anatomist; and whatever branch of the profession he may subsequently take up in practice there can be no doubt that for his first qualification a thorough study and knowledge of Anatomy ought to be required. Some few might be able to pass the entire Anatomical Examination at the end of the second year; and we should certainly allow them to do so; they in all probability will be those who will subsequently continue the pursuit of it as a speciality, at least for a time. They might be required to dissect during their third Winter Session, but, having already passed, would of course be exempted from the bugbear of an examination hanging over their heads at the end of it. We believe that the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland, and the University of Dublin, for its degree of Master of Surgery, are the only licensing bodies at present

requiring this three sessions of practical dissection. We would gladly see this good example extended to all the Corporations. Since Practical Anatomy would therefore occupy a good deal of the student's time in this second year we should suggest that three courses of lectures would be sufficient to require attendance on, viz., Surgery, Practice of Medicine, and Materia Medica, one hour each for five days in the week during the Winter Session. During the Summer Session we should be glad to see a course of Laboratory Chemistry taken up, with practical manipulations by the student, as already required by many of the licensing bodies. The course prescribed by the University of London in this department comprehends "practical exercises in conducting the more important processes of general and pharmaceutical chemistry, in applying tests for the discovering the adulteration of articles of the Materia Medica, and the presence and nature of poisons; and in the examination of mineral waters, animal secretions, urinary deposits, and calculi &c." This curriculum could not be improved, and we should wish to see it universally adopted. The importance of a sound knowledge of chemistry is becoming daily of more importance, not only in connexion with sanitary measures, but even at the bed-side, and that not merely as regards the testing of animal excretions, but even as regards a clear comprehension of the physiological and pathological processes of organic change in the animal frame. We may confidently expect that much of our future improvement both in diagnosis and therapeutics will be made in the direction of Chemical Science. In addition to these Laboratory studies in Chemistry the student might also in this session go through a course of practical pharmacy in the dispensary attached to his hospital whether for intern or extern patients. A strict examination in Junior Anatomy, and the above courses of lectures and work, ought, as before, to close the second year, and the passing thereof be made a necessary preliminary to any further advance in the student's status or to his obtaining credit for any of the Lectures,

Hospital or other work laid down for his subsequent years of study.

And here we may remark on the absolute necessity that the examination we speak of shall be practical to the last degree. A *vivâ voce* examination may fairly ascertain a great deal of the candidate's knowledge in many subjects, but in Anatomy it is we think almost useless as a test, at least if the examination is held in class, and the question passed round from one to the next, as we have seen done in some places even for the final examination. No measure of the candidate's ignorance can be arrived at in this way. He answers five questions in ten rounds, many of them the briefest and least comprehensive possible; but no record can be kept in this form of examination of the questions missed by the candidate, which may imply an amount of ignorance that ought not to be condoned by even a much larger per centage of answers. But in truth the difficulty of making a question comprehensive when examining in class is very great. If it is made so, as for instance if a candidate is told to describe a certain bone or osseous process, he flounders half through it, missing half of what he ought to describe, gets half a mark, and the question is passed on to the next who has merely to fill up the other's deficiencies; thus they make out a good deal between them, or perhaps among three or four, and the examiner gets an impression that the question has been fully answered when probably none of them had more than a most imperfect idea of the matter. A written examination is obviously far superior to this; there the same questions are given to all the candidates, and an exact measure can be taken, and also kept, alike of the knowledge and the ignorance displayed by each candidate separately. But we do not propose to set aside *vivâ voce* examination in Anatomy, nor indeed in any other subject, as we hold that it affords a means of searching out a candidate's knowledge, and as we might say following him up, far superior to that afforded by any written paper. We only urge that the *vivâ voce* examina-

tion ought never to be in class, but separate for each candidate. Also that in Anatomy an examination on the dead subject ought always to form an essential part of the test; the candidate being required to perform a certain dissection, describing the parts brought into view, by which means he will undergo a test not only of his knowledge of the parts when actually exposed to the refreshing of his memory, but also his knowledge of what is to be exposed and how to do it. It is obvious that in practical surgery this is the knowledge really required. Then a bone might be given him to describe, or a portion of a bone, itself on sight, as he holds it in his hand, its relations from memory. Thus and thus only will his satisfactory and thorough knowledge of this most important department be properly tested and authenticated. In Materia Medica, again, the articles or preparations ought to be put into his hand, and he ought to be required to recognise them, some chemically by the application of tests, some by their external qualities cognisable by one or more of his senses; some he might be expected to recognise by his sight, some by smell, the use of his other senses being excluded; even the muscular sense might be sufficient to determine a substance; and we should conceive a low estimate of a candidate's practical familiarity with preparations, or indeed of his theoretical knowledge of the properties of drugs, who, on a small stoppered phial of pure sulphuric acid being put into his hand should fail to recognise it by its weight alone. Similarly a candidate who should fail to recognise sulphurous acid, tincture of opium, tincture of ergot, and many other substances by the unaided sense of smell might be put down as having failed to supplement his theoretical knowledge of drugs, however complete, by that practical knowledge which is absolutely essential in so thoroughly practical a profession as that of medicine.

In the third Winter Session a second course of Lectures on Surgery is deemed essential by all Licensing Boards. We might perhaps suggest that it would be desirable that the two

courses, if consisting of lectures merely, should be taken out from different lecturers; for it is undoubtedly the case that lecturers, however able, are very much in the habit of getting into a groove in their lectures, so that those of the second session are merely a repetition of those in the first; whereas an unquestionable advantage would be gained by the broader and more varied view that would be given of this branch through the handling of a second lecturer, perhaps taking up totally different subjects, or even if otherwise, yet certainly handling the same subjects with all that essential difference of treatment that will be always found where two able and original men treat the same topic.

But we think that the requisition of a course on Practical Surgery by the London College of Surgeons as a substitute for the second course of lectures, is perhaps a valuable innovation. They order "Instruction in which each pupil shall be exercised in practical details, such as in the application of Anatomical facts to Surgery on the living person, or on the dead body; the use of surgical apparatus; the examination of diseased structures, as illustrated in the contents of a museum and otherwise." But this last recommendation, as also their recommendation regarding Operative Surgery, is, we think, of sufficient importance to be enforced not as portions of an optional course instead of a second theoretical course, but in the shape of enjoining special and separate courses on these important subjects; and this we shall again recur to. The Irish College alone, we believe, requires three courses of lectures on Surgery; the third might perhaps with advantage take the form here indicated by the English College.

But if a second course in Surgery is desirable surely the same argument would hold good with reference to Practical Medicine. The handling of this important and extensive topic by a second lecturer would be of the highest value. Or in this also a practical course might be substituted for a second theoretical course no less than in Surgery. Such

matters as the practical use, by the student himself, of the thermometer, the sphygmograph, the ophthalmoscope, the laryngoscope, &c., matters not to be learnt in a day, nor even from merely seeing the physician use them in his clinical rounds; and with these the application of Anatomical, and we might add Chemical, Science to Medicine in the living subject; all this would furnish ample material for a second course of lectures, if it did not appear desirable that such should take the form of mere theory, as would certainly seem to us. The Institutes and Principles of Medicine is a subject having a special course of lectures devoted to it in the University of Dublin, and with this perhaps such practical work might advantageously be combined. This verges into Medical Pathology, but might be kept separate, and in this session we should wish to see a regular and separate course of lectures on Pathology, a branch of study which we think is frequently not attended with a sufficient amount of systematic regularity. Attendance during his previous sessions in the Post Mortem room of the hospital, which ought invariably to form a recognised and necessary branch of hospital attendance, would have given a student every preparation for obtaining the full benefit from such a course, or courses, say three months of Medical and three months of Surgical Pathology. This attendance in the Post Mortem room is specially enjoined by the Edinburgh College of Surgeons, but by it only of all the Corporations.

In this third session also the student ought to be required to undertake regular dressing in the Hospital, a matter of the utmost importance, but at present left almost wholly to his own option.

We have assumed a third year's hospital study as a matter of course, since we really see no meaning, no meaning of value, in the recommendation of four years' medical study by the General Medical Council unless it includes four years of hospital work. To our minds practical medical study is hospital attendance, and hospital attendance, if rightly con-

ducted, is practical medical study. Regular courses of lectures, though of great auxiliary value, cannot be compared with this in importance; they are indeed only a means of systematising hospital observations and studies. If hospital study be omitted a four years' course of attendance on lectures that might easily be got over in two comes to be little more than an arbitrary trade restriction; and however earnestly we advocate every enforcement of trade restriction that represents real value gained by the student, and solid benefit conferred on the public in exchange for the higher emoluments and status we desire, we would yet equally earnestly deprecate anything that savoured of trade restriction as such, and apart from such advantages and benefits. Yet we find that many Corporations require two years' hospital study only, the University of London, strange to say, being among the list; and the University of Dublin requiring two years only for the M.B. degree, but three years for the M.C. The Apothecaries' Society of England requires fifteen months only—namely, two winter sessions and one summer session. This it will be recollected is for a licence accepted as a full qualification in medicine by the Army, Navy, and Poor Law Boards, and constituting indeed the sole medical licence possessed by much the larger majority of practitioners in England. We have had occasion to congratulate this Corporation on the comparatively high character of its preliminary studies; we regret that we should now be obliged as thoroughly to condemn the inefficient hospital curriculum herein laid down, both as insufficient for the due medical instruction of the student, and as underbidding the curriculum of other Boards to a most serious extent. We would commend this point to the notice of the assembled representatives of other Boards at the General Medical Council. It will of course be said in answer that the five years' apprenticeship required by the Hall is equivalent to three years' hospital; but against this view we most emphatically protest. The five years' apprenticeship may be passed, nay in all probability

will be passed, in little better than Practical Pharmacy under the direction of some General Practitioner, probably of antiquated views and style of practice himself, and who almost certainly will be behind the time of day, in this rapidly progressing age, as regards the use of instruments of modern medical research, the microscope, the test tube, the laryngoscope, the sphygmograph and many others; and who certainly will be unable to give the student the advantage of scientific medical instruction at all to be compared with that to be obtained from the highly-skilled consultants who attend our Hospital wards. No, we hold that this is a matter that emphatically requires to be set right, and that four years' study ought for the future to imply three winter and summer sessions of hospital practice, both Medical and Surgical, with six months' subsequent residence in hospital either in town or country; of this last we shall speak again when we come to the fourth year. A six months' course of lectures on Midwifery and the Diseases of Women and Children might be taken out during this third winter session, attendance at a Lying-in Hospital being taken out at some period during which the student shall not be engaged in dissections or post-mortem examinations, since it can hardly be doubted that the terrible epidemics of puerperal fever which so often scourge our Lying-in Hospitals owe their origin to carelessness on this point. It is well known that where a medical man has been merely present at a post-mortem, without even taking part in it, he has communicated the infection of puerperal fever to his patients, and our duty to these poor women in their hour of pain and danger absolutely demands that they shall not be exposed to any avoidable infection. Such precautions are indeed necessary even for the credit of the hospitals, which are sometimes exposed to severe and unfavourable criticism on account of their mortality from this cause greatly exceeding that of patients attended at their own homes, where, however, even if infection be communicated to a single patient its further extension is

limited, but if once introduced into a hospital ward it is impossible to place limits on its extension. This matter, namely, that students should not be allowed to attend puerperal cases while engaged in dissection or post-mortem observations, we think of such importance that we would commend it to the notice of sanitary authorities.

For the third Winter Session, therefore, from the above considerations, we have put down Hospital and Dissections as before; a second course of lectures on Surgery; a second course on Medicine, and a course on Midwifery. The third Summer Session would we think be the best time to take out a course of Operative Surgery, which we would make compulsory. We select the Summer Session on account of the small demand at that time of the year for subjects for dissection; and the third year because we think that this course might with most advantage be taken while the student's knowledge of Anatomy was fresh in his mind, and previous to his undertaking the duties of a hospital resident. For lectures in this three months we should recommend a course on Medical Jurisprudence and Toxicology, with testing for poisons practically as well as theoretically taught; a course on Insanity, and a course on Ophthalmology; requiring also attendance during the three months at an Asylum, and also at an Ophthalmic Hospital. The importance of these departments of medical science as branches not merely of special but of general medical education is every day becoming more and more recognised, and for obvious reasons; because indeed it is the general practitioner who will first see such cases, and if he is competent, through careful study of them, to treat them in their early stages, they may perhaps be checked before they have gone so far as to require the care of the specialist. Take for instance insanity; when a patient becomes unmanageable at home, dangerous to himself and others, then, and not till then, is he placed under the care of the specialist; but it is seldom that there have not been several months of gradually increasing mental infirmity

previously, mental infirmity connected, as is now universally admitted, with bodily infirmity, some mal-assimilation, some sleeplessness, some over-exertion, some congestion, which the general practitioner, if experienced in such cases, might be able to detect and successfully treat, even while relatives might perceive nothing of the dark cloud looming over the patient, and sure to burst ere long in unmistakeable fury if not scientifically treated in an early stage. We repeat that in the careful study of insanity by the general practitioner will be found the best guarantee for the arrest of that fast-rising tide of insanity which, as statistics show, is rapidly filling our asylums to excess, paralysing the working energies of its victims, and weighting society with their care, when their cure has in too many cases been rendered hopeless by delay in the early application of scientific treatment. Thus we end our curriculum for the third year, and would urge that an examination test, as before, should be enforced at the end of it in the subjects thus studied during the year, namely, Senior Anatomy, Surgical and Medical Pathology, and Surgery and Medicine as theoretically studied, not requiring at present any Clinical examination, but requiring that a certain number of carefully-taken hospital cases be presented, as might indeed be also done with much advantage at the end of the second year, say twelve surgical and twelve medical cases each year, the candidate being liable to examination on his own cases in order to ensure his *bonâ fide* knowledge of them apart from any copying of friends' case-books. We think that only by this system of requiring the presentation of case-books will it be possible to ensure that the student shall not merely walk his hospital but work his hospital, that he shall be present not only in body but also in mind; for it must not be supposed that he will have the audacity to present to the examiners his first-taken twelve cases, exhibiting the raw student in every line; no, knowing that important weight in his examinations will attach to these he will practice them

over and over again until they satisfy the eye of some friendly senior student, than whom, we may be sure, they will encounter no severer critic, at least as regards style and manner, if not perhaps as regards knowledge. The examination in Midwifery, Medical Jurisprudence, Insanity, and Ophthalmology ought also to be now got over, and the student thus left free from the weight of any theoretical examination during his fourth year's study. We think it would also be fairer to the student that his examination in Operative Surgery should be taken now, and with it a further examination on casts, drawings and specimens in the museum of his hospital. We should make a certificate of having passed these examinations, and with them of having completed his theoretical study, an essential preliminary to the student's entering upon his fourth year, and with it the peculiar form of study which we should wish to see then enforced; namely, intern residence in some one of our many Metropolitan Hospitals or County Infirmaries. This is a point which we think cannot be too much insisted on. The daily, nay hourly, observation of the serious cases which fill our hospitals and infirmaries, the special charge of them, the sense of responsibility connected therewith, and special study incident thereto, constitute a training for future practice different, not merely in degree, but almost in kind from the mere morning visit in the wake of the surgeon or physician among a crowd of students. We would make the special charge of patients as an intern resident a *sine quâ non* in the case of every student before he should receive a licence to practice; but, in order to do justice to the patients under such student's care, we should require that he should have passed satisfactorily in all his subjects as far as a theoretical examination, supplementary practical teaching, and experience as a dresser could guarantee his competency; and for this reason also we should think it desirable that his examination in Operative Surgery, and in casts of injuries, &c., should be taken before a certificate of qualification for

the duties of hospital residence should be conferred on him. Then we would leave it optional with him whether to select his hospital for intern residence in the Metropolis or in the County Infirmaries, where probably his opportunities for observation and practice would not be inferior to those to be obtained in a metropolitan hospital, even if the character of the theoretical instruction there given should prove not quite so systematically arranged as in the metropolitan hospitals where such clinical instruction is made a special business for a large class. But it will be remembered that we have already subjected our medical student to twenty-seven months of such metropolitan instruction before permitting him to take up residence in a country hospital.

What, then, have we now left behind for his final or pass examination? We have left his practical and clinical examination in all its departments; Clinical Medicine, Surgery, clinical and manipulative, Pathology in the Post Mortem room, all within the wards of a hospital. Nor need there be any difficulty about this hospital examination, for it might be made a stipulation that any metropolitan hospital which is to be recognised as a School of Clinical Instruction is to open its wards at all times to the Examining bodies so recognising it; and if the Court of Examiners should decide only a short time previously, say at an afternoon meeting on the previous day, what hospital, and what cases therein, they would select, there could be no previous rapid getting up of cases on the part of the candidate; while a recognised small "tip" from each of the candidates so examined to each patient he examines would remove the reluctance on the part of the patient to an unusual amount of clinical investigation.

With the curriculum above proposed carefully carried out by strict Examiners we think there can be little doubt but that the candidate finally successful would go out on the world fully competent to practice his profession, as far as such competency can be secured by the possession of ability, careful, thorough, systematic training, and strict practical as

well as theoretical tests; while, on the other hand, we think there would be little fear that the profession would have for the future to complain of any very excessive competition or its accompanying insufficient remuneration for arduous duties carefully and skilfully performed.

As regards the constitution of examining Boards or Courts there remains something to say.

In the first place it is evidently desirable that Examiners should not be very old, nor yet very young. It may be said that in the mathematical tripos at Cambridge very young examiners of high distinction prove themselves very successful; true, but it must be remembered that their examination business consists of theory merely. It would obviously be wholly a mistake in a profession like ours to place a young man lately passed, though with any conceivable distinction, to examine in the practical parts of the examination, say in Surgery, Medicine or Midwifery; several years of hospital practice and clinical teaching ought to have passed over his head, and his eminence in his subject ought to be acknowledged, before he should be allowed to take his place at an Examining Board. On the other hand it is obvious that, in a science so rapidly developing in all directions as that of Medicine, a man far advanced in years is equally unsuitable. What he does he doubtless does well; what he knows he knows thoroughly; but can he be expected to have kept abreast of the time in modern methods of investigation; to have assimilated the laborious researches and discoveries, or the improved modes of practice, of men whose clinical teacher he might himself have been? We think hardly; and yet much of the best work in our profession, much of that which it is most essential that our students should know and pass in, is the work of men under 40 years of age, and perhaps we might say that much the greater part of all the real work done in the profession is the work of men under 50.

But again, it is highly probable that an elderly examiner in the metropolis will have adopted a speciality in practice, or

at least will have got into a groove, and we all know how hard it is to keep from so doing; and thus, particularly if he has been an examiner before, the crammers will have discovered his line, have taken his measure, and will be able to send in candidates who shall pass on a theoretical "grind" without practical knowledge. Examiners in practical work might be safely taken between the ages of 35 and 60; on either side of these lines the advantages which given individuals might present as examiners would probably be more than counterbalanced by corresponding disadvantages. On the other hand, in the purely theoretical parts of the work, very young men of distinction would probably make first class examiners. The life, energy, and ardour of youth are by no means insignificant qualities in the formation of a good examiner. And younger men are fresh from the study of their work themselves, and are likely to have made themselves acquainted with the most recent researches and the most advanced views on their special subject. For instance, Gerhardt's chemical notation has for several years been universally accepted by the scientific world, and young men would of course use it alike in teaching and examining; but we could hardly expect a man of over 50 to accept it as the basis of his examination. Nor should we expect Zimmermann's and Simon's views of fibrinisation to be insisted on by a physiological teacher or examiner above that age. Other instances of modern researches we might adduce, the results of which are being accepted by younger men, but perhaps the only consequence of our so doing would be to elicit a devout aspiration that the said younger men may be kept as long as possible from the chairs wherein to teach, or the Courts wherein to examine in, the said doctrines of modern research. We all remember the Scotch professor of chemistry as then known who pronounced Sir Humphrey Davy "a verra troublesome person."

And here we are led to remark that the first of the offices above spoken of is beyond all question a necessary qualification

for the second. A man must have been in the habit of teaching before he can possibly make a good examiner, nay we should be inclined to say before he can make an examiner at all. The amount of care in study, the thorough knowledge of his subject, the different points of view in which the same thing may be put, nay even the necessary grasp of a student's capacities, and the faculty of eliciting his real knowledge and distinguishing the true from the false, the real from the apparent, the sound from the superficial, the practical from the theoretical, all these most necessary qualities in an examiner are to be obtained only by the habit of careful and systematic teaching in the same subject as that in which he is appointed to examine.

And here we must reprobate to a certain extent the practice among some public teachers, teachers whose lectures the student is obliged to attend in order to obtain some required certificate, of teaching other than their pupils, of delivering lectures intended rather for publication in some medical periodical, and suited for men practising their profession, nay perhaps intended for them, rather than for the students, mere beginners, to whom they are delivered. This practice may perhaps pay the lecturer, but it does not pay the pupil. This practice very much, we believe, contributes to the necessity for the employment of private teachers by the student, men who must suit themselves to their classes under penalty of finding the latter go elsewhere.

Sometimes, also, able men get weary of lecturing year after year on elementary truths to mere beginners. And yet these mere beginners cannot comprehend the higher theories and doctrines which such lecturers will place before them. For instance, as an eminent clinical teacher (J. H. Bennett) says, "What can be more absurd than lecturing to first year's students of Anatomy on the theories of growth and molecules, nuclei, and cells, or to those of Chemistry on the relations between digestion and muscular power."

And the consequence of such teaching is that such stu-

dents, finding their time absolutely thrown away, pay the fee merely and desert the class, or are present in body merely, but employ their time and thoughts in recording that fact with their penknives on the backs of the benches. It is not so at private classes; there all is attention and life, partly perhaps because the tutorial system of question and answer is so much adopted, but also because the teacher's own interests oblige him to devote his attention entirely to that style and class of information which will best suit the majority of his pupils. And yet these systematic and profound professional lectures are valuable to the last degree, particularly to the more intelligent and more advanced student, at least where the lecturer is really an able man and thoroughly acquainted with his subject. But if this is the case there is no fear of his benches being empty. Yet sometimes this is not the case; or a man may be very well acquainted with his subject himself, and yet wholly unable to impart his information to others, or to put it in a systematic and categorical form, or to expound it with sufficient clearness, and withal sufficient life in his style and manner, to ensure that it shall really find an entrance to, and take lasting hold in the minds of his audience. We have known such lecturers; men from whom little or nothing was to be learned; but we must say that in our own student days a proportion of two out of three of the lecturers we had the privilege of hearing gave courses which we should infinitely prefer to any course of private tuition. The evil, therefore, is, we believe, a limited one, and might perhaps be met without any very sweeping change; in fact a perfectly free interchange of recognition by the different teaching Corporations of each other's lecture certificates, so that the student should not be absolutely tied, as is sometimes the case, to one particular lecturer, might be sufficient to accomplish all that is wanted; for any inefficient lecturer would then find his benches deserted, and could hardly for very shame retain his post. This free trade system is indeed already the rule in most

places, and we think with much advantage, but in some of the Scotch Licensing Bodies protection is still the order of the day to a certain extent.

One most essential point in relation to Boards of Examiners is that they shall no longer be paid in proportion to the number of candidates passed or examined, but by a fixed salary. The former extraordinary mode of payment is still, we regret to say, very much in vogue among Licensing Bodies, and is directly opposed in its fundamental idea to the fundamental idea of either an Examining Board or a Licensing Body. For, let us ask, are these Bodies, that is to say, either the Corporation or its Court of Examiners, appointed for the purpose of passing candidates or of rejecting them? Is their object, according to the idea of the public or the State whose work they are intended to do, and whose interests they are chartered to subserve, that of getting every candidate through whom they decently can, or of stopping every one who has not fully proved his right to pass? The latter object is undoubtedly that which the public and professional interests alike require, and for which the Corporations are maintained in being. And the Examining Boards are the agency by means of which this function is discharged. This is obviously the fundamental idea of an Examining Board, and any provision which antagonises this idea so far paralyses the healthy and useful action of such a Board. What are we to say then when we find that not only the Corporations by virtue of their diploma fees, but the Examiners also by their examination fees, are paid in proportion to their failure to discharge this their essential duty, paid in proportion as they omit to do that for which they were instituted, and do its exact opposite; bribed in fact to act in a manner directly antagonistic to their duty. Given such a state of things it surely needs no argument further than an appeal to the radical constitution of human nature to shew that the profession must necessarily be overstocked, or that there will be careless, listless and indolent students where we ought to find, and

under another regime and system would find, life and energy, zeal and diligence. The mind is so used to the system that it fails at once to perceive its radical absurdity and error. And yet if the idea were retained, but with a reversed action, so that it should favour the interests alike of the public and the profession by rejecting incompetent men, instead of antagonising these interests as at present, we fear that the proposal would be laughed at as absurd, absurd on account of its too pointedly putting a premium on the efficient doing of that which both the public and the profession require to be done, and which both the Corporations and Examining Boards are appointed expressly to do.

Suppose for instance that the Examiners were paid a fixed salary subject to a deduction on account of each candidate passed; this would retain the idea, but reverse its action; but this arrangement would not weight the scale more heavily in favour of the public and the profession than the present arrangement weights it against them. If any one says such a proposal is absurd when exerting its influence in the direction of the express duty of Boards and Corporations, let him also in fairness admit that the present arrangement is much more absurd, exerting its influence, as it does, in the direction diametrically opposed to such duty. For ourselves we do not exactly propose the above-mentioned arrangement; its too pointed effect in securing the purpose of the examination would commend it rather to a Chinese Board of Examining Mandarins than to an English Board; but as we have already urged that the income of the Corporations be fixed irrespective of the number of diplomas granted, so we now propose that the salaries of all examiners be fixed irrespective of the number of candidates examined or passed. This premium might fairly, and without absurdity, be placed upon strictness in the examiners, that the candidate should be required to take out a fresh course in any subject in which he shall fail, clinical, systematic or practical, and of six months or three months as the case may be. Where the examiners are also

teachers this would prove a slight premium in the right direction, instead of in the wrong one; and we should propose that the examiners in each subject be always selected from among the actual teachers in such subject in the various schools connected with, or recognised by, the Licensing Body electing such examiners.

There is another malversation in connexion with Courts of Examiners which has place in the arrangements of the most important Licensing Body in England as far as numbers passed are concerned, the Royal College of Surgeons, namely, that members of the Court of Examiners retain their seats on the Council of the College along with their Examinerships. This abuse was censured by all the medical periodicals several years ago, but we regret to have to say that it still continues in force, notwithstanding the protests made by some eminent names against it, and notably by Mr. Simon, who has declined the Examinership rather than conform to the abuse. The fees from this office amount to over £400 per annum, so that this act of self-abnegation of Mr. Simon is not a mere honour declined; and on the other hand we can see why other members of the Council hold so tenaciously by the office. With reference to this system a writer in the Lancet of April 22, 1865, observes:—

"The charter provides for the election of Examiners out "of the bounds of the Council. This has been laughed at. "Examiners have been elected solely from the Council, and "the condition of election has been to 'keep friends' with the "Examiners, so that when the time came their votes should "be secured. Thus the Examiners have held the reins, and "have driven the College into a very ugly corner. They "have been singularly obstructive, and have maintained a "system which is an abuse of the meaning of the charter, "and has perpetuated the worst forms of nepotism and inef-"ficiency."

And the British Medical Journal also says (July, 1864):—

"The office of examiner, by a constant system of re-election,

"has been made a life appointment, though the charter of "1852 made it quinquennial. The Court of Examiners are "supreme in the Council, and no Councillor has any chance "of obtaining the sweets and rewards of an examiner's office "who makes himself obnoxious to the Court of Examiners. "It is a notorious and admitted fact that Fellows seek to "enter the Council, not for the sole purpose of performing "the duties of a Councillor's office, but mainly that they may "thereby enter the portal which, under the misdirection of "the Council, has been hitherto the only entrance to the "Court of Examiners. Through the improper influence of "the Court of Examiners within the Council the voice of "honest reform is stifled, and the most flagrant abuses are "perpetrated; and as the present system exists only on the "perpetuation of abuses, the Councillor soon learns that to "destroy existing abuses would be to kill the goose which "shall lay for him, he hopes, that golden egg, an examiner's "office. We venture to affirm that in the latter half of this "19th century, and under the force of modern reforming "ideas, there is not to be found in this country in operation "at the present time another instance of such management of "affairs. No man ought to have the power of electing, or "assisting to elect himself into an office of honour or money "value. The Court of Examiners, which receives the fees, "is all powerful in the Council which fixes the amount they "shall receive for Examining."

Certainly if some thorough reform of these various malversations is not speedily effected we shall not be surprised if the entire professional corporations of the kingdom be swept away by the zeal of a reforming Parliament and the just indignation of public opinion. Now is the time for the corporations to awake and put their houses in order; already there are signs of Government interference, and the mutterings of the coming storm may already be heard in the distance. We believe that nothing but energetic and thoroughly efficient action will avail to save the corporations,

nothing but bringing them up to the level of the reforming ideas of the day. It may yet be done, but the work cannot be begun a moment too soon. The profession has been much-enduring and long-suffering, but it so happens that the interests of the public and the profession are identical in the present instance, and if the attention of the public happens ever to be strongly drawn to these points, as by some review article or powerful newspaper leader, it will rise up in its wrath and sweep away at one stroke the whole of our ancient and venerable corporations. We write in their interests; "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

The union of Corporations granting different licences for the purpose of effecting a conjoint examination was, we believe, first proposed by the present writer about five years ago;* the idea was then criticised unfavourably and spoken of as Utopian, but now it is universally talked of, and appears to be near realisation; indeed it is even said that it is contemplated by the Legislature as a measure to be forced on the Corporations if they cannot speedily come to some agreement as to terms. The terms, that is to say, the pecuniary arrangements, are the principal difficulty. How much of the diploma fees are to be allocated to each of the Examining Bodies? As regards the Irish Corporations we might perhaps solve the present difficulty by enquiring what was the money value which each has placed on its diploma hitherto. If we assume the correctness of this method of finding a proportion or ratio between them then we think the question is settled; for it would not be reasonable to ask that in consequence of their joining together for such examination the Corporations should suffer pecuniarily, nor yet could the student reasons ably expect to get off cheaper than he did before. It will be said that he can half-qualify now, taking out a single instead of a double or full qualification, and thus pay less.

* Vide the author's former Carmichael Prize Essay (1868), p. 97, et seq. The proposal for a conjoint examination there made was, as far as I know, the earliest suggestion made to that effect.—I. A.

We reply that in so doing, since he undoubtedly will practise any department of his profession, he wrongs both the public, in practising branches in which he is not qualified, and also the profession by competing unfairly against men who are fully qualified; and that accordingly if we can get the power we are perfectly right to make him pay as much as those who have hitherto taken out the double qualification, who would otherwise be unfairly dealt with. Therefore by simply adding the old diploma fees together, we arrive at the sum which ought to be charged the student for his conjoint examination, and by dividing this so that each Corporation shall obtain the same fee for its diploma as before, we arrive at a just and equitable division, for we allot to each Corporation exactly its own estimate of the value of its diploma; and indeed not only so but we also ensure that its diploma shall be taken by a larger number of persons, namely, by all, whereas formerly this was by no means the case, as regards the Apothecaries' Hall notably so. We understand that the difficulty between the Irish Bodies on this point has principally arisen on the part of this Company, who think that they are offered under-payment for their share of the work, since they claim to issue a full medical qualification. We reply that although undoubtedly no one for the future could hold their qualification, however full it may be, as his only medical qualification, yet every one would have to pay the same sum to them for their share in examining as if he had taken no other qualification; and as the candidates for their qualification have of late years been remarkably few, as is notorious, it might perhaps be more satisfactory to pocket the fees of the many, even though the Hall should no longer have the satisfaction of seeing medical men, *i.e.* the few, write L.A.H. after their names. For that matter, which after all is only a sentimental grievance, it might be well if men passed by such a conjoint examination were to receive some new and comprehensive title, such as Medical Licentiate in Omnibus, Ireland, abbre-

viated into M.L.I., it being understood that the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons and the Apothecaries' Hall qualifications were all included. The fee for this conjoint examination would then be made up as follows:—L.K.Q.C.P., £15 . 15s.; L.R.C.S.I., £26 . 15s.; L.A.H., we believe, 16s.; Midwifery, if added, £2 . 2s.—in all £45 . 6s; or suppose we allowed the Apothecaries' Hall £1 . 10s., an estimate nearly double their own, it would come to £46. We cannot conceive on what grounds the fee should be reduced to £30, or anything less than this conjoint sum of £46. Not in the interest of the Colleges obviously, since it would simply reduce their emoluments; nor in that of the profession, since every additional barrier adds to the return to be derived by medical men from their profession; nor in that of the public, since, if the rewards of the profession are higher, a better class of men as regards intellect and ability will be attracted to it; nor to save the student's pocket, since he has already been in the habit of paying this sum, unless he has palmed himself off on the public as being fully qualified when he was only half qualified; and, moreover, be the charge for his diploma what it may, he will re-imburse himself at the cost of the public, since the economic maxim is well known that it is the consumer who pays for all, and this re-imbursement he will be enabled to accomplish by the economical result of a slight comparative reduction in the numbers of the profession caused by the existence of this slight additional barrier to entrance thereinto. It may indeed be said that it will tend to drive students to England or Scotland for half-licences; but the immediate answer is that the same system must forthwith be enforced there also, and obviously will so be enforced by Legislative interference in the interest of the public, if the Corporations do not anticipate them in the interest of the profession, for, as we have said before, these two interests are identical.

The Hall obviously need not require an apprenticeship from candidates for this conjoint qualification since they are

merely to be examined by it without receiving its diploma. From those who wish to receive its diploma and write L.A.H. after their names the apprenticeship would of course still be required. Now since about 100 gentlemen pass in Dublin every year, the Hall, at £1. 10s. each, would clear about £150 instead of the £25 which is we believe about its present average. We have also above proposed that it should augment its funds by a pharmaceutical licence for compounding merely. The application of the funds derivable from the students' fees for the conjoint examination would thus be removed from question, and need no longer be the subject of arrangement, since each Corporation would receive as much as before, or indeed rather more, as more students would now necessarily pay fees to it, and these funds it could apply to its Museum, its Examiners' Salaries or what else it pleased as before.

In examining the scheme for a conjoint examination adopted by the Council of the R.C.S.I. at their meeting on March 17th, 1870, we have only one objection to make to the draft of examination as therein proposed, and this is with reference to the subjects of Chemistry and Scientific Botany. We protest energetically against the idea that such subjects as these can be entrusted to the Apothecaries' Hall, consisting, as its Court does, of gentlemen engaged merely in general practice and pharmacy. To examine in anything relating to pharmacy, compounding, the manufacture of drugs, the testing of their purity, and Botany and Chemistry so far as herein involved, is of course their business; but to examine in Chemistry as such, either Theoretical or Practical, or in Scientific Botany, without a single teacher of these subjects in their ranks, is simply preposterous. The examination in these subjects ought undoubtedly to be entrusted to one of the other Bodies with the stipulation that the examiners shall be recognised teachers of these subjects.

We believe that there has been some further difficulty regarding the place to be occupied by the Universities in any

scheme for Conjoint Examination, claiming as they do the right to give a full double degree; and the University of Dublin further refusing to give such degrees to any save graduates in Arts. But we think that this very refusal on the part of the University of Dublin makes her case at least capable of arrangement by agreement without any special difficulty; for when the very high and difficult barrier of an Arts degree, involving both time and general education to an unusual extent, has to be passed before the candidate is qualified for any Medical Degree, it is obvious that the University can never be accused of underselling the other Corporations; therefore all that is necessary is to let this University continue, as she has an undoubted right to do, to grant her degrees irrespective altogether of the conjoint examination we are discussing; but if possible let her agree, and under the influence which the other Corporations could bring to bear on her she doubtless would agree, that such degrees for the future should not be granted separately, but that any candidate wishing to take one should be required also to take the other.

But the Licences of Dublin University and the degrees of the Queen's are granted after only one year's study in Arts, and here we confess is a more difficult question. Yet we think that even this barrier is perhaps sufficient to prevent any charge of undue competition against the professional corporations being brought against these Universities, and that perhaps if a similar undertaking were given on the part of the Universities with regard to these licences, namely, that they should never be allowed to be taken out singly, but necessarily conjointly, all that would be necessary would have been accomplished. For ourselves, however, we freely confess that we do not understand the giving of University Medical Degrees except to Graduates in Arts; we think that this ought to be the meaning of the letters M.B., M.D., or M.Ch. after a man's name, that he is not merely qualified as a surgeon or physician, for this any Corporation can do,

but that he has also gone through an extensive course of General Education and taken an Arts degree. We are aware that this would cut away a great portion of the diploma emoluments of the Scotch Universities and the Queen's University; but perhaps a compromise might be made by allowing the Universities to grant Licences, as the University of Dublin does, to all persons duly qualified professionally, whereby the fees would be retained, and the Degrees would guarantee in all cases that their possessors were thoroughly educated gentlemen. Some it is true object to such licences from Universities altogether; but they are an established fact, and as such we must regard them.

As regards the mode of conducting examinations, whether preliminary or professional, we would suggest that the oral and written system, or vivâ voce and paper, as they are more generally called, should in all cases be combined. Professional examiners, men to whom examining is the business of their lives, such as we find in the Universities, always adopt the combined method; for each method has its advantages, and each is therefore with satisfactory results supplemented by the other. In the vivâ voce method the Examiner can bring his own mind more directly to bear on that of the candidate, can better sift the knowledge of the latter as he follows him from point to point, and not his knowledge only, but also his power of bringing that knowledge to bear on a given point, a most important matter in our profession; he can more easily ascertain how far a mistake is the result of ignorance, gross and crass it may be, or how far it may depend on misapprehension of the point, or even of the Examiner's meaning. A candidate's ingenuity, and fertility of thought and resource can also be more satisfactorily ascertained by the vivâ voce method, and withal the depth of his acquaintance with his subject, since the Examiner can more readily progress step by step in the difficulty and searching strictness of his questions. And a conception of the candidate's manner, with all that it implies, can

hardly be arrived at by any other process. On the other hand, when definite questions are set on paper, system and method are tested more fully than they can be by a vivâ voce examination. There can be no shirking of the work imposed by them, no ingenious "fluking," or quick helping out of ignorance by a rapid appreciation of the Examiner's manner, or by aid cunningly obtained by the suggestion of a somewhat different form of putting the question. Here all must be straightforward, categorical, enumeration of points required, symptoms to be given, grounds for diagnosis to be set out, parts to be enumerated, functions detailed, or formulæ correctly set down.

The systematical, well-stored, thoughtful mind will, under this mode of examination, find the best results dependent on method, order, arrangement and thoroughness. In every examination, whether theoretical or clinical, we should always wish to see half the marks awarded for vivâ voce, and half for paper answers. In the clinical examination the paper would take the form of specifying such and such a patient, and requiring the candidate to examine him without questioning from the Examiner, and to write down such and such symptoms and signs of disease as he might observe or elicit, with his grounds for diagnosis, prognosis, and desirable treatment.

The marks at examinations ought in all cases to be by graduated numbers, say from 0 to 10, not by signifying Yes or No on the question of the candidate's passing; and a certain percentage of the whole number of marks, fixed beforehand, and also a minimum in each branch, ought to be required for passing. E. gr. 50 per cent. might be required as a minimum on the whole of an examination to pass the candidate; then if there were, say, 10 marks allotted as a maximum to each subject included in the examination, 4 marks might be required in each subject as a minimum, less than this being considered to exhibit a defective knowledge of that subject, however well other subjects might be answered.

In such a case however if the specified percentage were obtained on the whole, viz., 50 per cent. as we have assumed, the candidate might safely be referred to his studies in that department only in which he should have failed; whereas were the 50 per cent. in any case not reached he ought to be referred generally, and be required to pass in all the subjects at a later date.

Now having written thus much regarding the examination of candidates for the lower form of diploma or qualification, that which shall entitle them to practise, it may perhaps be advisable to say something about the higher qualifications, Fellowships in the Corporations, and Doctorates in the Universities. Hitherto there has been little difference in many cases as regards professional knowledge between the higher and the lower qualifications; the examinations have in some cases been supposed to be more strict for the higher, but in some cases this has not really held; and in some cases the Fellowships have been given merely on the payment of a certain sum, without any examination whatsoever. In some of the Universities there is not even an attempt at further testing of knowledge; the only qualification necessary for the higher degree, after having obtained the lower, being the lapse of a certain period of time, which may be counted from the date of the Arts degree, and the payment of an additional fee. In the College of Physicians again, both of England and Ireland, the Fellowship has been conferred by election only, very often greatly to the dissatisfaction of most worthy and able men, who have been shut out by faction, envy, or even party feeling, from well deserved honours.

The University of London, and the Colleges of Surgeons both English and Irish, require a farther examination in both general and professional knowledge previous to conferring their higher qualifications. As to the Scotch Universities, they have in general conferred the degree of M.D. as their first and only qualification, and thus have deprived themselves of the power of giving a higher one subsequently,

without thereby in the slightest degree improving the recognised or current value of their M.D.

The essential difference between the higher and lower qualifications has in all cases been that the possessor of the higher has been a member of the Corporation, and as such entitled to vote at its elections, while the holder of the lower has not. Now we have proposed in an earlier part of the present essay, that, for the consideration of a small annual fee, all possessors of the lower qualifications shall in all cases be permitted to vote at all elections of their respective Corporations, whether for Councillors, or Representatives on the General Medical Council. And we have further proposed for the lower qualification a style of knowledge and education, both professional and general, which we think is equivalent to that hitherto required by most Corporations for their higher qualifications.

Having thus proposed the removal of the essential differences heretofore existing between the holders of different degrees of qualification we should now desire to suggest another basis and object for the examination for higher qualifications in all Corporations. We propose that the Fellowship Examination of the Colleges, or the M.D. examination, in all cases to be held, of the Universities, shall in all cases be designed with the object of testing a man's capacity and ability *as a teacher* at least in some one professional or collateral branch of study; and that the candidate shall therefore be required in the first instance to prove his possession of a thorough and high general education both in science and classics, and also in English, something quite superior to anything that we have suggested for the lower qualification, and implying an education at least equivalent to that denoted by a degree in Arts at one of the old Universities, Cambridge, Oxford or Dublin.

Then in addition to this, the candidate being in possession of the lower qualification already, we should require him to exhibit, by a thorough examination, a special and thorough

practical and theoretical knowledge of the particular branch in which he should propose to qualify himself as a teacher, and on some subject in this branch, to be selected on the spot by the Examiners, we should require him to write a paper of some length, say such as could be written in three hours time, without reference to authorities, and this as well for the purpose of testing his general capacity and ability, as for testing his special knowledge of, and power of teaching, his chosen subject.

It might be desirable also that the candidate should be required actually to deliver a lecture, as if to a class of students, either on some subject selected by the Court of Examiners, or even upon some clinical case which he should be required to examine and treat of. This would test not only his knowledge, but his powers of communicating such knowledge to others, a most important point, as we hardly need to insist, in any person seeking a qualification guaranteeing his ability to teach.

From none but teachers so qualified would we accept any professional certificate produced by a student, whether for lectures or clinical attendance. This high qualification in the practical departments would then become an essential preliminary to all hospital appointments involving clinical instruction, and, of course, to all County Infirmaries also, under the system which we have proposed of allowing students in their fourth year to take out in a county infirmary an imperative hospital residence. These higher qualifications would thus also, even apart from such appointments, guarantee at once a polite education, and professional ability and distinction of the highest class.

It cannot be doubted, moreover, that the requisition of such a high standard of merit and knowledge in any person from whom certificates of instruction in any department are to be received would in many cases act in the right direction as a check on the appointment of inferior men to hospital posts and school lectureships. In hospital appointments it

cannot be doubted that lay governors often select men wholly incompetent to teach, while the able and talented competitor who has not been able to obtain the necessary amount of influential patronage, the man who would have done credit to the hospital and drawn crowds of students after him, is left to languish, it may be for years, in that state of hope deferred which too surely makes the heart sick. Too often also such appointments are gained through nepotism and other unfair influences, such as mere pecuniary considerations, by men wholly incompetent. Now we do not mean to say that, cæteris paribus, a man ought not to vote for his friend or relative rather than a mere stranger; but we do say that incompetency ought not through these considerations to be allowed to displace ability; that a certain amount of care ought to be taken that other things should be, if not exactly equal, at least up to a certain fixed standard of merit, so that, even if the very best and ablest man for the post is set aside, yet a sufficiently good and able man shall be selected, and thus that the institution, be it hospital or school, and withal the cause of professional education also, shall not suffer to any material extent even though the highest ability may fail to be appreciated as it deserves. It would not, of course be possible absolutely to bar appointments to hospitals or infirmaries except for those thus qualified; all that could be done would be to refuse their certificates of instruction, which practically would probably, ere long, amount to the same thing; for if two men were to apply to the Governors of a County Infirmary for the post of Surgeon, one of whom should be able to produce his Fellowship diploma certifying that he was qualified to teach Surgery, while the other failed to do so, there can be no doubt but the minds of the Governors would incline strongly to the candidate who should produce such unequivocal evidence of superior professional attainments.

We have above discussed the education of the student up

to the time at which he shall receive his qualification to practise, and be sent out on the world to make his way in his profession. But if it is true in other occupations that a man must be all his life a learner, much more is it true in our profession, where there is so wide a range of study, and so much of it is so easily forgotten amid the urgent calls of private practice or public work. In some departments, undoubtedly, subsequent reading may do much to keep in memory what a man has learned, and enable him to progress farther. But in one department certainly books will do little, and that a most important department to the practical surgeon. We mean that of practical Anatomy. There can be no doubt that the dispensary or workhouse practitioner in a country district soon forgets much of his Anatomy, even of his Surgical Anatomy, and hence when he is suddenly called on to perform some important operation, which by the way does not happen sufficiently often to keep him well up in it by constant repetition, and yet is none the less urgent when it does happen, he finds himself at a loss on some important question relating to it, the necessary consequence of which is timidity and irresolution, to his own and the patient's loss, or else bungling and mistake with still worse consequences to both. And yet it is absolutely impossible that men immersed in the harassing responsibilities and busy cares of practice can run up to the metropolis for a time sufficient to enable them to take out and dissect a subject to refresh their knowledge, even once in five or ten years, which would be a great assistance to them. A week at a metropolitan hospital once a year would be of great value to them, and perhaps when the profession is less overstocked, so that if a man introduces a locum tenens he need have no fear that he will stay, and injure his practice, this may be capable of accomplishment. But a week in the dissecting room would be of little value to him, and few could spare a longer time from their work on which their bread depends. Yet it is of the very last importance to the public, who depend on his skill, that he should be able to

keep up his Anatomical knowledge by occasional dissection; and we think that public opinion may perhaps at present be sufficiently enlightened to permit of a farther advance in this direction being now made than was sanctioned by the Anatomy Act. The public now are perfectly aware of the importance to themselves of the continued study of Anatomy by medical men; and we think therefore that if the subject were taken up by the Corporations and professional Journals that the Legislature might be induced to pass a new Act giving farther opportunities for the prosecution of this study to medical men. We should propose that in any institution maintained out of rates paid by the public, in case any body shall not have been claimed by friends within say forty-eight hours after death, the said body may be used for purposes of dissection by the surgeon of the institution, or by other qualified medical men under his surveillance. Our workhouses and lunatic asylums would thus become valuable institutions to the medical men of the neighbourhood in providing them subjects for dissection. Such subjects ought not to be allowed to be removed from the Dead-house of the institution for purposes of dissection; and the surgeon of the institution would have to assume the duty of seeing that they were duly buried, each body in a coffin by itself, and with all due ceremony, after its uses for purposes of science were terminated.

It will be seen that no hurt would be done to the feelings of relatives hereby, for we expressly provide that dissection shall only be permitted in the case of unclaimed bodies, which would in any case receive burial at the public expense, and probably within the grounds of the institution. Further it will be observed that our County Infirmaries, not being supported wholly by public rates, would not be allowed to be used under such a provision for the supply of bodies. In their case it could not be permitted, as it would undoubtedly have the effect of preventing patients from entering them, inasmuch as those who have recourse to them enter them not as paupers, nor on the ground of requiring general charitable

provision, but as suffering under serious disease and requiring medical charity only. But on the other hand it is admitted by all social economists that any influence which acts as a check on the tendency of the lowest class to have recourse to public or State aid for general relief, and in short to crowd into our workhouses through idleness, improvidence, or want of self-reliance, is an influence exerted in the right direction, and tending to check the frightful and rapidly extending canker of pauperism which is making such terrible inroads on our social system, and committing such havoc among our humbler population, utterly sapping all manly feelings of independence and self-reliance, and encouraging them in devoting all they can save to the public-house or other self-indulgence, instead of laying by a provision for themselves against old age or infirmity.

Again it will be remembered that it is not to the giddy and thoughtless young student that we propose thus to afford the right to dissect in our public institutions; let his studies be confined to the dissecting room of his school as heretofore; no, it is to the careworn, thoughtful, hardworking practitioner, who would snatch laborious hours from his work to renew his anatomical studies not because he had an examination to pass, but because he knew that the efficient discharge of his duty to the public entrusted, or entrusting themselves, to his care, made it imperative on him so to study at whatever cost of labour to himself. It is indeed wholly in the interest of the public that we urge this matter; and we think that where a pauper or a lunatic has been carefully tended and provided for by the public during life, it is not too much to expect that his body after his death shall be used under the restrictions above specified, for their benefit and advantage. Nor need we fear that the privilege, being granted, would be abused, for indeed it would only be the more earnest, studious, and hardworking of the profession who would use it; but to them, as to their patients, it would be invaluable.

Having now finished the question of Medical Education from all points of view, it only remains to us, we believe, to say a few words regarding the constitution of the General Medical Council. Nor can these be words of praise. To say indeed that the Council has proved itself useless and inefficient, would only be to repeat what many said before it was instituted, and what everybody has said since. It has indeed now been unmistakeably demonstrated by many years of practical working that the system on which it is based is one not suited to the carrying out of the end for which it was instituted. It was instituted in order to effect a thorough and radical reform in Medical Education, but, being composed of the representatives of the very Corporations whose vested interests bound them to the maintenance of the abuses which were intended to be destroyed, it needed no Tiresias to foretell its failure to accomplish that object. Nay, more, as it so happened that the Corporations which had the most marked tendency to lower their standard were numerically in excess on the Council, all the efforts of those Bodies whose aim and object was to elevate the character of Medical Education were frustrated. Even if an expression of opinion or a recommendation from the Council were elicited, it would be laughed at and set aside by any Body which felt itself sufficiently powerful to set the Council at defiance, as was done notoriously by the English College of Surgeons. Moreover the constitution of the Council sets at nought one of the best known of economic rules, namely, that taxation and representation should be co-extensive; for in this instance the Council is paid by the profession at large, and is supposed to look after their interests, but the profession has no representation thereon, the only parties represented being the Corporations, to whose interests only, as is most natural, it devotes itself. The result is that the lowering competition for the fees of candidates for diplomas still goes on among the various Corporations, and that so long as this is the case all the best endeavours of those Cor-

porations who really desire to see the standard raised are in vain; they do raise their own standard as far as they can, or dare, shall we say; but to what purpose when it only results in filling their rivals' coffers at the expense of their own, and without benefit to the profession or the public? These Corporations certainly would not be injured if the Council were constituted on a different basis and given a really effective control over Medical Education. We have had different schemes put forward from time to time for effecting such changes in the constitution of the Council as shall bring it into harmony with the requirements of the profession and the views of these more advanced Corporations; but some of these proposals have been wanting in practicability, such as that of representing the registered practitioner on the Council; and others have been wanting in fairness, such as that of reducing the number of representatives in certain directions, the remainder being left as before. Now it seems to us that, whatever was the original design of the State in instituting this Council, yet in its constitution it has failed to effect the prime object for which alone the State will concern itself, namely, the preservation of the interests of the public. If it so happens that the interests of the profession are identical with these, so much the better for the profession; if it happens that the interests of the Corporations are opposed to these, so much the worse for the Corporations; but in neither case does the State concern itself with these considerations, but with the interests of the public alone.

Now we have written much on behalf of the profession; and somewhat on behalf of the Corporations; at present we shall write on behalf of the interests of the public for whom alone the Council has been called into existence and still exists.

And we propose that the Council shall be wholly remodelled, and constituted on a basis avowedly, and also plainly, devised solely in the interest of the public; that is to say that members shall be appointed to the Council neither

on behalf of such and such Corporations, nor yet on behalf of the profession, but on behalf of certain branches of the public service, or certain requirements of the commonwealth, which are to be supplied and subserved by the medical profession. The Army and Navy for instance, the Poor Law Department, and Sanitary Science, ought all to be represented on the Council as having need of efficient service from the profession. Again the three kingdoms as such might fairly be represented thereon as a means of introducing the interests of the public at large. And again, since the Council is a Council of Education, it would be highly desirable that Science should have her special representatives on it, who would also very effectively introduce a non-professional, or at least a non-practising element into the Council, which we think would probably prove beneficial to the public interest as looking at things more from the public than the professional point of view.

Suppose now we were to suggest such names as the following; premising, however, that all the appointments to the Council should be made by the Privy Council as representing the nation, on behalf of which the Council is appointed. Let us say as representing England Mr. John Simon, who would also in virtue of his office as medical officer of the Privy Council be the most suitable person for Presidentship of the Council.

For Scotland we might name Dr. John Hughes Bennett. For Ireland perhaps Sir D. J. Corrigan or Dr. Stokes. The Army might be fitly represented by Professor Parkes. The Navy by Dr. J. D. Hooker, who would also possess the recommendation of representing a scientific branch of education.

The Poor Law Service might be fittingly represented by Dr. Edward Smith; * and Sanitary Science by Dr. Rumsey;

* The lamented death of Dr. Edward Smith occurred in the long interval which has unfortunately elapsed, much against the author's wishes, between the writing and the publication of this essay. We might substitute the name of Dr. G. Buchanan or Dr. R. T. Thorne.

Science as such might with great eclat be represented by Professors Playfair, Tyndall, and Huxley, representing Chemical, Physical, and Biological Science, the first of whom as being a member of Parliament might hold the place of Vice-President. To these names we think that no one could entertain any objection. And if to a Council thus constituted full powers were granted to deal with any recalcitrant Corporation we believe that a great stride would at once be made in furthering the interests of the profession as being identical with those of the public which the Council, so constituted, would hold before it as the principal object of its existence and deliberations.

The present mode of paying the Council, or rather of raising funds wherewith to pay them, might perhaps be continued, though we cannot clearly understand why the profession should pay for doing the work of the public, or why a medical man should be charged £5 for putting his name on a register which serves, and is intended to serve, the public much more than the profession; but at least this would not be so bad as matters are at present, where the profession pays the Corporations, or their representatives, for doing their own work and serving their own interests, these being diametrically opposed to those of the profession, who pay the funds. That one Body should be compelled to tax itself to its own disadvantage, and for the advantage of another Body whose interests are opposed to its own, is an economic anomaly as great as would be the developmental anomaly which Mr. Darwin protests against as an impossibility in Nature, viz., that one species should vary in favour of the survival of another.

The above scheme may probably find but little favour among the Corporations, and we confess that we should hardly have dared to propose it had we not already suggested a means whereby the pecuniary interests of the various Corporations might be, as we believe, effectually guarded and preserved.

But even if such a thorough re-constitution of the Council as is above indicated cannot be expected, yet even in its present form there is much objection to be made to the mode of election of its members. Nominally the representatives of an entire Corporation, they are in reality chosen only by the Council thereof, and not even by the voice of the Fellows as a body, although by the constitution of the various Colleges these are entitled to vote on such a matter as much as the members of Council. In the case of the Colleges of Physicians indeed the Fellows all vote, but the number of these is so small and the Corporation so close that the member of the General Council no less fails to represent any thing like the common opinion of any large body of the profession, and is devoted altogether to the interests of the close Corporation which returns him.

In the case of the Universities the anomaly is still more egregious. The legal or regular state of things, according to the constitution of the Universities, is that the entire of the members of Convocation vote for the election of the University member of the General Medical Council. But Convocation includes all persons who have proceeded to the degree of Master of Arts, whether they belong to any profession or no, much less do they necessarily belong to the medical profession which is the interest to be represented. Hence we have one of two extravagant malversations; either the Senate of the University, a body even closer as a Corporation than the Colleges of Physicians, simply nominate a member, and Convocation ratifies their choice as a matter of course, or else if the members of Convocation who belong to the medical profession refuse to agree to this arrangement, and endeavour to return a nominee of their own, they find themselves opposed by the clerical members of the Convocation, who being of course in the majority actually succeed in drowning the voice of the profession whose interests are in question, and returning their nominee to the General Council.

A gross instance of this lately occurred at the election of

a representative for Durham University in the room of Dr. Embleton, when a man of known abilities and attainments was thus set aside in favour of a young and unknown individual.

On this extraordinary achievement of clerical meddlesomeness a local journal, the *Durham Chronicle*, has the following observations:—

"How, it may be asked, does it come to pass that a "gentleman with such negative qualifications should have "been preferred to so skilful a man as Dr. Humble? The "simple answer is, the genius of jobbery has accomplished "it. The professional intellect of Newcastle, and the classical intellect of Durham University, have been overborne "by the stolid qualities of the country parson. Every electioneering device was resorted to in order to secure Dr. "Pyle's return; votes were brought from a distance, carriage "paid; members of Convocation were created by *ad eundem* "degrees, and the payment of fees; and the ordinary members of Convocation were swamped by this sudden irruption "of a new force. We do not say these proceedings were "illegal; but they were, at any rate, unconstitutional. Lord "Brougham once said, when a conflict of opinion arose between the House of Lords and the House of Commons, "that it would be perfectly legal to strengthen the House of "Lords by the Sovereign marching a battalion of Guards "into the House and elevating them to the peerage; but it "would be in the highest degree unconstitutional. And so "it is that by a legal, but perfectly unconstitutional, exercise "of power, Dr. Pyle has been pitchforked into the General "Medical Council, and has thus superseded a very much "abler man."

We had supposed that with the abrogation of the power of the Archbishop of Canterbury to confer medical degrees fell the last remnant of the control which, in the dark ages, the Church exercised over the profession of medicine. But it seems that a new vent has been found or made for the exer-

cise of its volcanic force. What, we ask, have the clergy to say to us or our affairs? we do not as a profession interfere with their affairs; and we protest most energetically against the assumption on their part of any right to interfere with us either publicly or privately. Yet they seem to think that they are our natural and proper supervisors and superintendents of our work. We have even known a clergyman's wife, a Mrs. Proudie in a small way, imagine that she had a right to exercise what she assumed to be the undoubted privilege of her husband over a medical man, and write to a physician living at a distance of 40 miles that she would hold him responsible for the result of an unmanageable pauper case in which she happened to take some interest. We must reform this altogether.

As regards the Medical Council we have already proposed that in each Corporation all the Licentiates thereof shall be permitted to vote at the election of a member to represent the same thereon, in consideration of the payment of an annual registration or franchise fee. We have now to propose that a short enactment be sought by the profession from the Legislature to prevent any person not a member of the medical profession from taking any part in the election of a member of the Medical Council in any University, for it is to the Universities only, of course, that this opposite abuse is confined. A bill to this effect might very suitably be promoted by the professional Associations.

Our task, we believe, is now finished; we have honestly endeavoured to consider the causes of the present condition of the medical profession, evidently so much below that to which its intellectual and moral status, its public importance and efficiency, and its earnest and laborious work on behalf of the community so clearly entitle it. We have endeavoured to trace back to their first root and origin the causes which lie at the bottom of this state of things; and we have suggested the measures which seem to us likely to have the best

result in producing a remedial effect. No doubt we have not gone so far as many persons would desire. There are many who maintain that the only remedy for our present ills is to sweep away all the Corporations together, and establish one sole portal of entrance to the profession; this has been advocated by a section of the professional press; nor are we by any means sure that the proposal has not received the favourable consideration of Government. One thing is pretty certain, that if our inattention to and neglect of the public interest shall again render Legislative interference necessary it will be in this direction that it will operate.

But to our minds this would be revolution, not reform; and the genius of the British people is, and always has been, towards the reform of existing institutions, not towards their revolutionary removal, and replacement by others, new and untried.

For ourselves, we doubt if a one-portal system would be the best either for the profession or the public; for if the emoluments of the Central Board were to be made dependent on the fees of candidates for its professional licences, where is the guarantee to the profession that its interests would be one whit better attended to than they are at present? And if these emoluments were made independent of such fees, where would be the guarantee to the public that excessive Trades-unionism would not limit the numbers of the profession to such a degree that the public would have no practitioner to consult when they wanted one, quite irrespective of the question of his suitable remuneration?

No; we consider that the present system, whereby a certain amount of variety, and even national distinctive character, is maintained is preferable; nay we will even say a certain amount of competition between the different Corporations, provided only that effectual means shall be adopted to assure that such competition shall never be in the downward direction of a competition for fees, but always in the upward direction of a competition for honour and the high character of the professional licence of each Corporation.

Hence we have sought to suggest measures which while maintaining intact the distinctive character and individuality of each Corporation, guarding the present character and composition of its Executive, and protecting its pecuniary vested interests, shall yet so far improve its representative character, and enlarge its basis of electoral franchise as to bring it into harmony at once with the interests of the profession, and with the political thought and national sentiment of the present day, and shall also tend, as we have endeavoured to show, to render each Corporation more efficient in the discharge of its duty on behalf of the public, which consists in taking care that no person without proved ability and thorough professional knowledge shall be allowed to palm himself off on the public as a reliable adviser in their hours of illness, pain, and danger, even it may be on those who have no choice of their own, but must needs apply to the medical adviser provided for them by the State under the guidance of these Corporations.

Hence we venture to think that our suggestions, though we admit that they involve radical reform, are yet not revolutionary in their character; but that they occupy a middle ground, and indicate a middle course between the party of destruction on the one hand, and the party of obstruction on the other; "Medio tutissimus ibis." It is always the business of everyone who aspires to accomplish any practical reform to consider not only what might be, but what must be, not only what is desirable, but what is feasible, not only the object to be aimed at, but the course and means whereby it can be attained. And it is a maxim that the protection of vested interests is always essential, as a matter of policy, if not a matter of justice.

It is also desirable that reform should in most cases be urged on by degrees; it is seldom that a sweeping measure can be at once carried into effect; and hence we have suggested measures which can be adopted by any Corporation quite independently of any other, since we fear that, in the

present disunited and disorganised condition of our profession, unity of action can hardly be anticipated; but we believe that if some one Corporation of liberal and advanced views, and earnestness of purpose in the cause of professional reform were to lead the way others would shortly follow.

We will freely admit that some of our views and suggestions are somewhat advanced in their character; but we believe that the Corporation to which we have to submit them on the present occasion, as suggestions tending to "the "improvement of the profession, and the rendering of it a "more useful body to the public than it is at present," is at once one of the most liberal and the most progressive of any, and that it is far more inclined to consult the interests of the profession and of the public, than in any narrow or exclusive, or rigidly conservative spirit to seek its own interests to their disadvantage. Of this it has already given abundant proof; and we therefore without fear submit our above views and suggestions to their judgment, feeling assured that they will be judged with reference to their own independent demerits, and the standard proposed by the illustrious founder of the prizes which bear his name, rather than with reference to their immediate bearing on the interests of the Corporations as at present constituted.

We have endeavoured to suggest reform alike on behalf of, and in the interest of, the public and the Corporations; but more especially, in accordance with the terms of competition as prescribed by Carmichael himself, on behalf of the profession at large, that it may at once be more able, as it undoubtedly is willing, to discharge efficiently its onerous and laborious and responsible duties to the public, and also that it may henceforth discharge them under such conditions, both intrinsic and extrinsic, both inherent in itself, and also extraneous and relative, as shall cause its worth and importance to be more fully recognised by that public to whom it devotes its most earnest service, so that it shall progress in public estimation and reward, in public honour and private

recompence and consideration, until down to its humblest members it shall be universally considered to be no less entitled to status, distinction, and even pecuniary recompence for its arduous services than its sister professions of the Bar and the Church. If our suggestions and humble endeavours shall be found in any degree to have contributed to the bringing about of this desirable result on behalf of our much-enduring, hard-working and often distressed brethren, it will afford us more gratification than can possibly be given to us by any personal honour or distinction. If not, still upward and onward be the motto of our profession, assured that if not here, yet at least at a higher tribunal than any of earth, and before a more impartial Judge, those who have spent their lives in unrecompensed toil on behalf of the suffering and sorrowing will hear at last the joyful award, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

EXCELSIOR.

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