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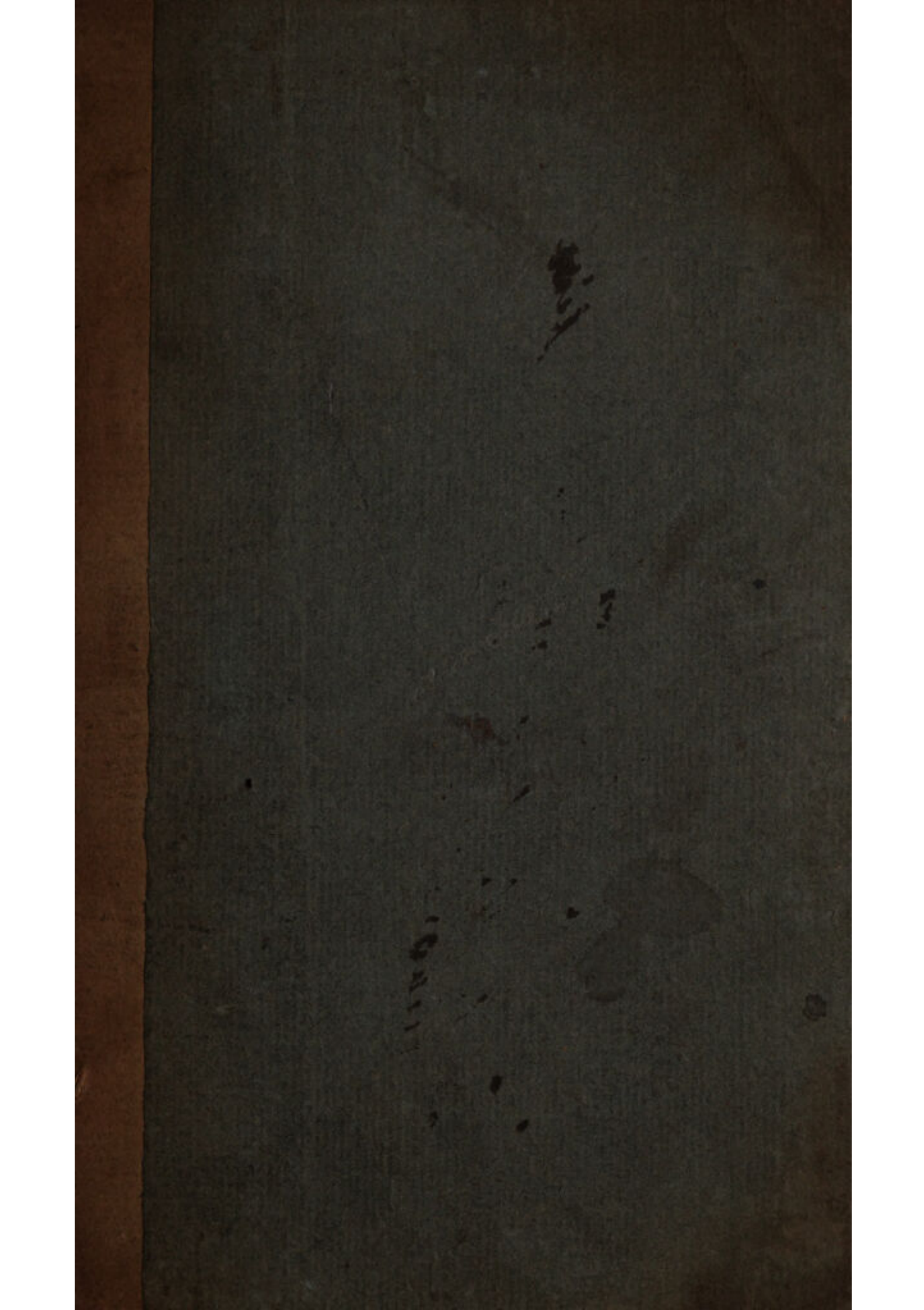
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To

James Poyer Esq.

from

The Author.

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James O'Connell

from

the

REFLECTIONS
ON THE
SURGEONS' BILL:

IN ANSWER TO
THREE PAMPHLETS
IN DEFENCE OF THAT BILL.

BY
JOHN RING,
MEMBER OF THE CORPORATION OF SURGEONS.

The petitioners against this Bill have great reason to complain. Their privileges have been violated; and even their property has been invaded. They have been too long trampled under foot: and however *grating* it may be to the ears of *some people*, they have the strongest title in the world, to have their complaints heard with patience and attention.

Lord THURLOW's Speech.

London :

Printed for HOOKHAM and CARPENTER, Old Bond Street; and
J. JOHNSON, St. Paul's Church Yard.

1798.

REVISIONS

OF THE

SURGEON'S BILL

IN FORCE

IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BY



THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT CLERK
WASHINGTON, D. C.
JAN 10 1881

Printed by the Government Printing Office
Washington, D. C.

1881

DEDICATION.

TO THE
MEMBERS
OF THE
CORPORATION OF SURGEONS,

Who opposed the late Surgeons' Bill.

GENTLEMEN,

I EMBRACE the favourable opportunity which this Publication affords me, to pay a just tribute of applause to your strenuous and unremitted exertions in defence of your injured rights; and to congratulate you on your victory.

To the Work which I now dedicate to you, in answer to three Pamphlets written in vindication of the late Surgeons' bill, of inglorious memory, I prefix three letters ; which I addressed to you and others, at different periods, while the bill was in agitation. The first was published at a time, when the secret artifices, undue influence, and gross misrepresentations of our adversaries, threatened to bear down all opposition ; and rendered all resistance to their efforts hopeless, unless the attention of the Legislature, and of the Public, could be roused. The great champion of our cause had not then risen. The bill had been read twice, and committed. It was to be read a third time on the day when that letter appeared ; and it was expected to be passed without much debate.

Parliament laboured under a delusion : and, to dispel that delusion, when strengthened by the powerful and imposing influence

ence of great names, was an arduous attempt. The subject was new and intricate ;

“ Puzzled with mazes, and perplex’d with errors.”

Our enemies were advancing triumphantly in their career ; erecting their haughty crests, and glorying in their strength. It was time to resist their inroads ; and to set bounds to their ambition. It was time to repel their insults ; and remind them of the humble origin from which they sprung.

It was necessary to illustrate the various obscure points in question, by a clear yet concise explanation. It was necessary to divest a subject so abstruse of technical phraseology ; to interest the passions in the cause of justice ; and to bring a forcible appeal home to every bosom.

Instead of dry abstract reasoning, it was necessary to urge the *argumentum ad hominem* :

new : to prove the flagrant misconduct of the petitioners for the bill in times past ; to prove they were unfit to be trusted with *new* powers, because they had abused the *old* ; and to rouse the public indignation against their atrocious attempts.

The second and third letters were written at subsequent periods : to remove prejudices unjustly excited ; and to elucidate several points, which even then were not well understood. *Then*, as well as *now*, our opponents strained every nerve, to conciliate favour by false pretences ; and to gratify their ambition by an overbearing influence. They raised the mist of prejudice ; to prevent the Public from discerning the true nature of the question, and their own real interest in the cause. In short, they seemed fearful, lest they should leave any sinister manœuvre, or mean stratagem, untried.

What-

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REFLECTIONS,

&c.

LETTER I.

To the Members of the Corporation of Surgeons.

GENTLEMEN,

A BILL has been brought into Parliament, and was nearly carried through both Houses, calculated to give a despotic power over the Surgeons' Company to a junto, self-nominated, consisting of an insignificant number, who fill up all vacancies in their own body; so that you are to obey laws, made by persons who have an interest distinct from your own; laws, made by a legislative body, in which you have no representation. This is a degradation of your profession, and even of your species; it is a daring attack on the free principles of the British constitution.

B

The

The increasing number and reputation of the members of the Company, deserve that the title of Corporation should be exchanged for that of College; but an attempt to confirm, extend, and perpetuate arbitrary power, and to refuse members of a scientific body, which the Legislature dignifies with the title of College, the privilege of a vote, in electing those who are to fill the offices, and to maintain the honour of the society, is a relic of *Barberism*.

The Court of Examiners have grossly abused the unlimited power given them by the former act, by passing bye-laws to render such persons as practise midwifery, or pharmacy, ineligible as Examiners. This, which shows the cloven foot of self-interest too clearly to escape detection, would exclude a Hunter, a Cruikshank, a Ford, a Carr, a White, a Denman, and even a Farquhar, men not inferior to the present members of the Court of Examiners, from a situation, where their abilities might have been so eminently serviceable to the world. In short, they seem to have heard of the bed of Procrustes; or, to speak more in style, they wish to preserve a remembrance of the Company from which they sprung; they wish to have no wigs, but such as fit *their own blocks*.

Are

Are they fearful, that the public are beginning to prefer men, who unite a knowledge of the practice of phyfic to that of furgery? Or do they dread a competition, and comparifon of abilities, with fuch men, *in their own court?*

Are thofe furgeons, who have obtained the diploma of the Corporation, competent? Or are the Examiners defirous of getting rich by *degrees*? Are they dazzled by the fplendour of the precious metal, and prevented from feeing their incompetency *till after examination*, when they become *rivals*?

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your moft humble Servant,

An Old Member of the Corporation.

LETTER II.

*To the Committee of Surgeons for oppofing the
Surgeons' Bill.*

GENTLEMEN,

NOTWITHSTANDING much has already been written on the nature of the Surgeons' bill; yet, from the intricacy of the fubject, there are many points not well underftood, except by thofe immediately concerned; and fome of

them have an interest in enveloping the matter in obscurity.

I am induced to take up my pen by hearing a misrepresentation of the business made by a person of that description, who asserted that the opponents of the bill objected to it, because they did not like to pay quarterage, a sum of ten shillings; and that there certainly were some abuses in the management of the affairs of the Company; for which reason he thought an act of Parliament necessary, in order to correct them. Such insinuations are calculated to deceive those to whom they are addressed. The opponents of the bill are actuated by no such paltry consideration as the tax alluded to; on the contrary, they are willing to pay a much more considerable sum, if it can be proved that the real interest of the Company requires it; but they object to the principle of the clause, which vests in the governors of the Corporation a power of levying contributions without consent of the members at large. Abuses in the management of the finances of the Company there certainly are; how the present bill tends to rectify them, I cannot discern. The first clause erects the Corporation into a College, a much more proper name for a scientific body; and the governors of the College are dignified with titles suitable to their rank in the Society: but the ordinary members are no
where

where recognised by the corresponding title of Fellows. Every member, on his admission, is to swear, " That, so long as he shall remain a
 " member of the College, he will in all things
 " be obedient to the council of the said College,
 " and to the rules, acts, statutes, and ordi-
 " nances thereof." It is therefore of the utmost consequence to the members of the Corporation, that the members of the council should be just and impartial. Whether this object is more likely to be attained by their continuing to elect themselves, or by their being elected by the members of the Corporation at large, or by the medium of a select committee, it is for the wisdom of the Legislature to decide.

In the College of Physicians, the Examiners, under the name of Censors, are elected by and from the Fellows at large; and would continue to be made in the same manner if the members were as numerous as the members of the Corporation of Surgeons; but in this, and all other respects, the members of the Corporation will bow with the utmost submission to the determination of the Legislature. The circumstance of election in this Corporation is of much more importance than would appear to any person not perfectly acquainted with their affairs. It was justly observed by one of the counsel for the bill, " That the public in general are not
 " judges

“judges of the merits of medical men.” It naturally follows, that they are liable to be imposed on by specious appearances, splendid titles, and high-sounding names.

The situation of President, &c. is not only lucrative, but honourable, and one of the first recommendations to public favour and high distinction. It is the road to riches, and to fame. What shall we say then to a bye-law, which, with mean selfish policy, stops up this path of preferment, and bars this road of honour, to nine parts out of ten of the profession? Would it not be prudent to hold out encouragement to the members of the Corporation, and to endeavour to excite emulation, in order to promote a more diligent cultivation of the science, and a more ample supply of good surgeons for the service of the public, both in peace and war? The bye-law alluded to declares, that no person practising pharmacy shall be eligible as an Examiner. It may be said in reply, that the members know this when they enter into the Company. This is not true, as far as regards the writer of these remarks; and probably many others may be in the same predicament. After passing an examination, swallowing the monstrous oath, paying the fee for his diploma, and reading in that diploma that he was entitled to all the privileges, franchises, and immunities,
granted

granted by the late act of Parliament to the Corporation of Surgeons of London; on his return home, he perused the statutes of the Corporation, which were given to him at his departure from the Hall, and had the mortification to find, that a malignant bye-law left him but little hope of attaining eminence in his profession. But whatever complaint he may have to make against the exclusion of those who practise pharmacy, he protests still more against the recent exclusion of those who practise midwifery, that most ancient and most important branch of surgery itself. It is, with respect to a great part of the members of the Company, a kind of *ex post facto* law, and breach of faith. When the governors of the Corporation were entrusted with a power of making bye-laws, it certainly was not foreseen that they would make laws paramount to the laws of the land; and, from motives of self-interest, frustrate the benevolent intention of the Legislature.

An apology was lately made for the inaccuracy of a memorandum of a resolution of the Court of Assistants, that it was agreed on a quarter of an hour before dinner; and when, just afterwards, it was asserted that there was no reason to fear any improper bye-law would be suffered to pass, as they must be signed by certain great officers of the law, it was well observed
by

By a royal Duke, that this was very true, unless they signed them a quarter of an hour before dinner ! It may be said, that the great names who fill the offices in the Corporation, forbid all suspicion of any improper attempt. The fact is, that all the danger arises from this source. By great names, the minds of the Legislature and of the Public are lulled into security ; of which the present bill, which passed through five stages out of six, unopposed, and unsuspected, affords a lamentable proof. Had it not been for the strenuous exertions of its opponents, it would have increased the emoluments of the Examiners, and the revenue of the Company, already flourishing, by fresh contributions, levied on surgeons within seven and ten miles ; and by taxing army and navy surgeons, would have robbed them of their dearly-earned rewards, guaranteed to them by the faith of more than one act of Parliament.

It is for the Legislature to determine, whether any surgeon should be allowed to practise in any part of the British dominions without passing an examination ; but it may safely be affirmed, that twenty-one surgeons are not sufficient for the due attendance of the vast number of persons, who live in, and within ten miles of this great metropolis ; therefore no impediments should be thrown in the way of other practitioners, nor any

discouragements allowed to damp the ardour of their pursuits.

When the Surgeons separated from the Barbers' Company, they claimed a right to administer medicines. Whether the exclusion of those who practise pharmacy from places of honour and emolument arises from false delicacy, from mistaken pride, from self-interest, or from jealousy; or whether those who passed the act of exclusion meant to express a contempt for what they did not understand; or whether it arises from all these causes combined, it is difficult to say: certain it is, that it operates as a stigma, and answers the purpose intended, by raising the mere mechanical surgeon in the estimation of the public, and depressing the man of general medical science in an equal degree.

When we consider how few of the public are able to employ a physician and a surgeon, or surgeon and apothecary, and when we consider the army and navy service, the necessity of a number of persons, who unite the study and practice of the two branches, must be obvious; and it requires little argument to prove, that what a celebrated author said on another occasion, may be said of these two sister arts, "*Utraque igitur per se indigens altera alterius auxilio eget.*"

The united skill of physic and surgery will avail

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matter of form, unless the elective franchise is extended. The relatives, pupils, and apprentices of Examiners, with or without merit, with or without genius or application, may continue to be elected; by which all competition, and all emulation, will, as heretofore, be confined to a very narrow channel; and the private interest of a few individuals predominate over the public good.

I am, wishing you all the success the justice of your cause so well deserves,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most humble Servant,

An Old Member of the Corporation.

LETTER III.

*To the Committee of Surgeons for opposing the
Surgeons' Bill.*

GENTLEMEN,

I HAVE, on former occasions, addressed to you some strictures on the conduct of your opponents; I shall now add a few more. By the present bill, eleven persons have the modesty to request, that they, and a few of their friends, in all twenty-one, may have absolute dominion for life, over the liberty and property of your whole Corporation, consisting of five or six hundred members. Supposing the request to be reasonable, the word *Corporation* ought not to be

exchanged for that of *College*. In a *College* there are persons called *Fellows*, who claim the right of electing, or being elected, to all offices; but *they order these things better in a Corporation*. This is an emblem, not of a scientific body, nor of the body politic, but of the *natural body*; where the rights, privileges, franchises, and immunities of all the members are, to labour for the *head*, in order to fill its mouth with *good things*.—So far there is some resemblance; but in one respect the Corporation of Surgeons differs from a *natural* body, for the members of it labour for the head, without any reciprocal advantage: it may therefore be called, an *unnatural* body.

The petitioners for the bill are charged by one of their own number, as well as by yourselves, with gross mismanagement, and wasting of your treasures; but in the present bill, they do all in their power to prevent such complaints in future, by introducing a clause to make your treasures *their own*; and surely a man may do what he pleases with *his own*.

The former oath bound a member to obey the *lawful* commands; the present binds him to obey *all* the commands of his task-masters. To give them their due, it was humane and considerate, no longer to call a member of the Company a *Freeman*.

Some

Some think the power of making bye-laws was abused, when the Examiners invaded the laws of the land, and made arbitrary exclusions of nine-tenths of the members from places of profit and distinction; but the judicious *few* are of opinion, that it is the height of presumption in practitioners of medicine, to aspire to rank themselves with an off-set of a *Company of Barbers*.

In the amended act, Mr. Dundas, one of the serjeant-surgeons to his Majesty, is a solitary exception: all others are still excluded, let their merit be ever so great. It remains to be seen, whether Mr. Dundas will accept of such a compliment.

This arbitrary power of making bye-laws, like all other arbitrary power, scorns to be confined within bounds; it strives to burst its channel, and overflow its banks. The extension of the jurisdiction of the Company will certainly help to fill the coffers of the Examiners and other officers of the Corporation; it will enable them to reap a more extensive harvest, *and a golden harvest it will be*; but it too much resembles a farce acted in another country, called *fraternization*, in which the performers give you the *fraternal embrace* while they *pick your pocket*.

Under

Under our former constitution, and under our ancient rulers, we suffered much ; being compelled to pay fines, or to serve difficult and troublesome offices, while we were excluded from those which are easy, pleasant, and profitable. What may we not expect from the present rulers, and the present constitution ! Our ancient rulers excluded those who practise pharmacy from all advantageous offices ; our present rulers have excluded those who practise a legitimate and essential branch of surgery itself. *Their fathers chastised us with whips, but they have chastised us with scorpions.*

Although you have hitherto gained no one advantage for yourselves, yet I sincerely congratulate you on the noble struggle which you have made, in defence of the rights and liberties of the whole Corporation,—in defence of the rights and liberties of the army and navy surgeons, and of the whole profession. If you want the *patronage* which the army and navy surgeons enjoy, if you have no *great personages* to espouse your cause, yet you have a *Russell* and a *Thurlow* ; and, I trust, the wisdom and justice of the Legislature will not suffer all the rights and all the interests of the Corporation to be, as they hitherto have been, *quite overlooked*. The same temperate appeals, and
the

the same manly perseverance, must eventually triumph.

I am, with great respect,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most humble Servant,

An Old Member of the Corporation.

An Analysis of "The Dressing for Lord Thurlow."

THIS Dressing is of the *caustic* kind; but, when applied to the noble Lord for whom it is intended, it will not *stick*. The preparer of it, who expresses a sovereign contempt for pharmacy, that gem of which he knows not the value, is said already to repent of his temerity, in handling such acrimonious ingredients; but it is too late, when he has *burnt his fingers*.

This composition abounds equally with simile, and with satire: and it would puzzle Scaliger himself to determine, whether his *simile* or his *satire* is most unfortunate. He no where disputes the abilities of Lord Thurlow; but endeavours to depreciate and vilify the character of a lawyer and of an orator. Some apology may be made for his abuse of Lord Thurlow's oratory, since he still smarts under its lash; but none for his

wasting his time in retaliation, when he should be dressing his own sores.

So much, at present, for his satire.—In regard to his similes,—one of the most striking is, his comparing the science of surgery to Mount Ætna; while he compares the profession of a barber to a hillock of mud, growing like an excrescence on its surface. The first inundation, he says, buried the hillock; but I am inclined to think, from the dulness of his lucubrations, that it was not sufficient to wash away the *mud*.

This same inundation, he adds, propagated in a mighty torrent the blaze of discovery. This is a most amazing discovery indeed; especially, as he tells us just before, that medicine is the first art that is practised in human society, because we cannot exist without it; and the last that is brought to perfection, on account of its *abstruseness*: and, just after, that Lord Thurlow must be a very superficial observer not to know, that surgery, of all the arts which the world has produced, is at once the most ancient, most critical, and most profound; and that the *longest life*, with the *most recondite speculation*, is scarcely sufficient to develope its *intricacies*, or unfold its inventions. He gravely tells us, that this most abstruse of all arts has lately burst forth like a volcano.—An *eruption*, it is true, has lately

lately taken place in the neighbourhood of St. Thomas's Hospital;—not an eruption of arts and sciences, but an eruption of the *scribbling itch*.

This *profound* and *critical* writer informs us, that although surgeons were originally incorporated with barbers, there is no reason why they should not now be separated and exalted. This is another wonderful discovery.—As to the first part of it, the separation, no surgeon will dispute it; and, after reading a page or two of the performance in question, the barbers will have no objection to it; as they will readily discern, that some members of the Corporation of Surgeons are *no shavers*.

As to the exaltation of Surgery,—I hope the author, if he really is a member of the Surgeons' Company, will in future be sparing of his literary effusions; or he will furnish others, besides Lord Thurlow, with an argument for degrading, instead of exalting, one of the most ancient, most useful, and most honourable of all professions. Neither surgeons nor barbers will boast of a member, who cannot handle an edged tool without cutting himself.

While I was writing these remarks, I received a letter from a distinguished opponent of the

late infamous bill; in which he says, " Have
 " you Birch's book, which he calls *A Dressing*
 " *for Lord Thurlow?* If you have not, pray
 " get it, and lend it to every one you can."—
 This may possibly preserve the wretched pro-
 duction for some time from *that end*, to which it
 seems by its nature to be destined. I must how-
 ever remark, that no sarcasms of Lord Thurlow
 are so severe, or leave so indelible a stain on the
 character of the Court of Examiners, as the pa-
 negyric of one of their own party. Well may
 they exclaim, This was not our enemy, else we
 could have borne it; but it was thou, even thou,
 our familiar friend. We took sweet counsel to-
 gether, and walked in the house of Lords as
 friends.—Whether they will consider him as
 their friend in future, is not for me to deter-
 mine; nor whether their vindication was writ-
 ten by Mr. *Birch*; nor whether they prevailed
 on him to write it. If they did, it is not the
 first time they have prepared *a rod for their own*
backs.

The author of the pamphlet, whoever he is,
 has two other elegant similes, viz. he says, the
 two professions of a surgeon and a barber are
 like a living and a dead acorn, planted in the
 same spot of earth: the one has become a stu-
 pendous oak, the shade and ornament of the
 forest; while the other, deprived of growth
 and

and vitality, lies mouldering in its foundations. This author, who has discovered the foundations of a dead acorn, will never discover the *longitude*, unless it be the longitude of a *barber's pole*.—First he compares the profession of a barber to an excrescence *growing* on the surface of surgery; next he affirms it is like a dead acorn, and does not grow at all.—The truth is, that, if we look a little deeper than the surface, we may readily discern the reason of their being incorporated together. Shaving is undoubtedly a surgical operation; and when it was only performed for medical purposes, was as reputable as bleeding: but when it became the fashion to mow the chin, it was followed by numbers of illiterate persons; and consequently fell into disrepute. I cannot, therefore, agree with this author, that their primary consolidation is a disgrace to the age that joined them, nor that it is any imputation of dishonour upon *this*, to refuse to recognise their separation, while the press teems with observations written by a surgeon, which would disgrace a barber; or at least tend to prove, that he is only *a chip of the old block*.

He says, The paltry mound, that is, the barbers—which obstructed the overflow of the burning mountain, that is, the surgeons, continues with the same *insipidity*, where chance first ordained it to grow. This opinion may

arise from his want of *taste*: but happy would it have been for his readers, if the paltry mound had still obstructed the overflow; and prevented them from being plagued with his miserable *eruption*.

If this author is wise, and knows his own interest, he will be cautious how he awakens the vengeance of those redoubtable heroes, who mow down all before them; and take many a better man than him by the nose. If they are at present in pursuit of higher game, they may prevail on their friend Mr. Packwood to give him a Dressing.

Our author asks Lord Thurlow, what the bill is, against which his Lordship has summoned up all the *phlegm* of his temperament? For *phlegm* read *choler*. Had our author been one of the builders of the tower of Babel, he would have asked for what he did *not* want, and thereby have procured what he wanted.—He proceeds,—Is it a bill for the aggrandisement of a few by the ruin of the many?—Is it a bill for the extinction of science?—Is it a bill to deprive the naval surgeon of that final and lasting recompence, a domestic settlement?—To these queries *he* answers, *No*; *the House of Lords* answers, *Yes*.

He

He adds, I need not tell your Lordship, that in every profession there must be some standard of appreciation: and in another place he upbraids Lord Thurlow, for having denied to the public that necessary and indispensable test of chirurgical skill, an *anatomical* tribunal. For *anatomical* read *chirurgical*. If he means to say, that you may become a skilful surgeon by mere anatomical pursuits, he might as well say, that you may become an excellent architect in a brick-field.

Whether the members of the Corporation should enjoy the exclusive right of practising surgery, or whether no such encouragement is necessary, and the promiscuous practice of that difficult art should be tolerated as of late, is a question worthy of the serious deliberation, and collected wisdom, of Parliament: but it ill becomes those persons to contend for an *exclusive* jurisdiction, who have never given any other test of ability, than what is given by those, whom their jealousy has excluded from having any share in that jurisdiction.

Our author gives us to understand, that he has the happiness of being one of the *elect*. *We*, says he, could have discriminated genius: *We* could have selected it from the common mass of empiricism, and have recommended it to notice.

tice.—How *We* apples swim!—But, he adds, *mankind* cannot discriminate. Therefore what he subjoins may be true, namely, that they place confidence in such as himself. Who, says he, would employ a man because he had practised *between the poles*?—And, pray, where has our admirable author practised, but between the poles? Perhaps he means, between the tropics: as to himself, I suspect he practises *Under the Pole*. As a well-judged compliment to himself, he tells us, that mankind confide only in such as himself; and that his practice is sanctioned by the general approbation of such as *cannot discriminate*.

Who, he exclaims triumphantly, would employ a man because he had practised *between the poles*, or exercised his knife among the blacks of the East, or the slaves of the Western world? Take care, Sir, how you talk of the slaves of the Western world, lest the Bishop of Rochester should accuse you of democracy, as he did the petitioners against the Surgeons' bill, because they wished for the Corporation to have, as other scientific bodies have, and as other corporations have, some share, not in the management, (that would be democracy,) but in the election of those who were to make laws for them, and to have the management of their own affairs; a privilege of which the Corporation were deprived by a former *Surgeons' bill*;—

a pri-

a privilege enjoyed even by *Barbers*. But it is rank heresy, and a damnable opinion, to suppose that the *people* of the Surgeons' Community, or any other community, have any thing to do with laws, but *to obey them!*

Never was there a bill of more consequence to the community brought before the Legislature; and never one of a more perplexed and intricate nature; and of which the merits were less understood by the public. In order to be able to form a just judgment, to do strict justice to contending parties, and to consult the great interest of the public at large, in a bill of such a nature, it is necessary that Legislators, whose attention is engaged by the great concerns of the empire, should receive information and explanation from the professors of the science in general, and the members of the Corporation at large; as well as from the framers of the bill, who had an interest in deceiving them. Such extensive information little accords with the surreptitious manner in which the Surgeons' bill was conducted through its different stages by the supporters of that bill. Even when an opposition to it arose, every species of misrepresentation was had recourse to, in order to disguise the truth, and conceal the real merits of the cause.

By

By the framers of the bill it was asserted, that the opposition to it arose only from a few persons practising pharmacy; and from some persons who objected to pay them their paltry quarterage. By a right reverend Prelate, related to one of them, it was affirmed, that the petitioners against the bill were *levellers*; and by another right reverend Prelate, that they were democrats;—assertions, all equally destitute of foundation.

The conduct of the framers of the bill, who affected a superiority and supercilious contempt, which even a possession of the talents they want, could not justify, was sufficient to excite in their opponents more than *phlegm*. This gave rise to the different letters published on that occasion; the petitioners against the bill conceiving it to be a duty they owed to the public, to the profession, and to themselves, to expose the clandestine arts and iniquitous designs of their oppressors, and to repel the shafts of calumny.—Conscious of the uprightness of their intentions, and equally detesting democracy on the one hand, and despotism on the other, they heartily agree with the Bishop of Rochester, that it would be happy for mankind, if *all monsters* had been *strangled in the birth*; but they little expected to be called *levellers* by the Bishop of Bangor; who is himself *the greatest leveller on the Bench*.

But,

But, to return to the author of the *Dressing*: why should a man deserve less confidence, for exercising his knife among the *blacks* in the East, or the *slaves* in the Western world, than he for exercising his knife among his fellow-citizens, the *whites* and *freemen* of London; or his pen against that respectable and venerable character, Lord Thurlow? But whom will that man not calumniate? and who can be injured by the calumny of that man, who accuses Government of the horrid crime of murdering our wounded soldiers and seamen, to save the expense of their maintenance?

Not content with defaming the character of Lord Thurlow, our author insults even over the infirmities of his age: but it is not the first time that the old lion has been insulted by an ass.

This writer, who insults over Lord Thurlow's decrepitude, who spares neither his age nor his infirmity, reminds him, that he is not so old, but that he may yet be afflicted with the stone, or a cancer in the rectum;—the complaint from which his brother suffered such excruciating torments. In that case, he remarks, his Lordship must not expect, that the men who live at *the sign of the Red Rag* will be very lenient operators. This is a friendly hint; and, while it justifies his Lordship in proposing, that such persons

as the author of the *Dressing* should be compelled to put out a sign, that he might know how to shun them, as a sailor shuns a rock, and a school-boy *Birch*,—it proves the title of this *humane surgeon* to live at the sign of the *Red Rag*.

He tells Lord Thurlow, for his consolation, that, like the tyrant Dionysius, he may live to be afraid of his *barber*; but, if his Lordship will take his word, he has much more reason to be afraid of his *surgeon*. In one part of his book he seems jealous of the honours conferred on the Veterinary College; in another he complains, that the *farrier* has been permitted to usurp the place of the *surgeon*. If Lord Thurlow has any regard for his horses, he will not allow *such a surgeon* to usurp the place of his *farrier*.

He tells us, that the greatest of poets was descended from a *surgeon*; and that the greatest of the evangelists *was a surgeon*. From his talent in fiction, he himself seems to be descended from the poet; for all he says is not *gospel*.

He says, Power never makes such implacable enemies, as when it is exercised to the downfall of science.—This is a very indifferent compli-

ment to science. An elegant and accomplished author says,

—————ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec finit esse feros.

Our author, on the contrary, tells us, that no men are such implacable enemies as men of science. If this be the case, from science, and men of science, good Lord deliver us. But I trust it will be acknowledged by every one, except such as are totally devoid of all science, that no men are so able to revenge injuries, or so ready to forgive them, as men of science.

He complains, that Lord Thurlow has disconcerted the plans of himself and his associates; that he has *calumniated* them, and given them an *irreparable affront*: yet he affirms that he cannot *injure* them. After this, we should not expect he would represent the name of Thurlow, as for ever recorded with detestation, and pronounced with contempt, in the annals of medical science; and the rising generation of surgeons, like so many savages, exulting over his ashes, and burning him in effigy like *Guy Fawkes*. For us, adds he, our measure of revenge will be full, from the inevitable obloquy that will attend your *decrepitude*.—If implacability is the criterion of science, our author eclipses

Newton: but who would expect, after the barbarous and inhuman sentiments expressed above, and his telling us he is in good practice, that he should suppose Lord Thurlow's want of humanity would have rendered him incapable of being a surgeon?

He asks, whether the functions of a surgeon can be adequately exercised by a student in bell-metal mortars. If a student in bell-metal mortars is unfit to be a surgeon, *à fortiori* he is unfit to be an Examiner; and yet, among the framers of the late bill are to be found more than one or two students in *bell-metal mortars*. It may be a consolation to some of the younger members of the Corporation to know, that either the royal touch, or the situation of hospital surgeons, whether obtained by purchase or connexion, is capable of concealing, if not obliterating, the taint of this *original sin*.

The exclusion of those who practise pharmacy, or midwifery, from the Court of Examiners, arises not from pride, but from jealousy and self-interest. It is to the interest of the Examiners to exclude a formidable rival; but it is not to the interest of the public to separate the practice of kindred arts, and put asunder what nature has joined; nor to respect a man the *more*, in pro-

proportion as he becomes *less* useful, and of course *less* respectable.

What, indeed, has surgery to boast of more reputable than pharmacy? Is it the administering of a clyster, or the cleansing of a fistula? Not that I really think either of these offices mean; or wish to cast the least imputation upon either. *Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto*: but I wish to remind those, who affect a superiority not warranted by reason, how ill-founded their pretensions are. It may seem strange, that any persons practising pharmacy, should have signed an approbation of a bill calculated to injure themselves; it was committing a kind of suicide, and cutting their own throats; but the bill was fallacious, and the bye-laws were to be confirmed without being recited. Some of those gentlemen did it inadvertently; others to oblige their patrons; more than one of them may say, with their brother in *Romeo and Juliet*, *My poverty, and not my will, consented*.

But what heightens the injustice, and aggravates the absurdity of the conduct of the Examiners and their adherents, is, that almost all of them, if not all, practise pharmacy in a greater or less degree; that is, as far as their interest requires, and their opportunities admit. —Is the profession of surgery rendered respectable

ble by fraud, or by jesuitical duplicity, and that pharisaical hypocrisy, which would disgrace any other profession? Is it rendered respectable by their stigmatising others for what they practise themselves, or by their endeavouring to impoverish others, for following a branch of the profession by which they are enriched? No: but as it is to the interest of the public to have as many able surgeons as possible, it is to their interest to have as few as possible: as it is to the interest of the public to promote the general cultivation of the science, it is to their interest to prevent it.

In regard to pharmacy, they ought to study it more, or practise it less; and in regard to physic, they should give some proof of their understanding it, or not practise it at all. Though it is a question less agitated of late, it is of infinitely more importance, inasmuch as cases in physic occur so much more frequently, and as the public are much less able to discriminate either the nature of the case, or the merit of the practitioner in physic, than in surgery. Surgical empirics kill their thousands, but medical empirics their ten thousands; not by the knife, nor by the hatchet, which give alarm, but by balls, or rather pills, and powder which makes *no report*.

The

The necessity of compelling every man to give some test of his medical, as well as chirurgical abilities, has often been urged, and, I hope, will not always be urged in vain. Mankind are tremblingly alive to external diseases and accidents, which are the most frequent objects of surgery; but as to internal diseases, no one can estimate their importance, but such as have made them the objects of their laborious research, and patient investigation. The superior importance of physic to surgery, holds good even in fleets and armies, where far more perish by sickness than by the sword: yet a cure in surgery is most likely to be crowned with popular applause, and to attract the admiration both of the great vulgar, and of the small. The reason is obvious: whatever is superficial, is most on a level with their understanding.

Since, therefore, the knowledge and practice of physic add dignity to the character of a surgeon, and the knowledge and practice of pharmacy do not degrade it; and since humanity, policy, reason, and justice require, that the public should obtain medical assistance, in ordinary cases, at a moderate expense, no persons can be so well qualified to render that assistance, as those who are well acquainted with the structure of the human frame.

Our

Our author says, the Court of Examiners have hitherto constituted a tribunal, the design of which was, to protect society from ignorance and empiricism, by giving a diplomatic sanction to men of abilities. How well they have answered the design of their institution, may be collected from what he subjoins, viz. that the army, navy, and empire at large, have been inundated and overwhelmed with impudent pretenders.

The latter part of this assertion, the existence of *impudent pretenders*, is too true to be contradicted. The *Dressing for Lord Thurlow* contains intrinsic evidence of the existence of such a character; and the truth of it is corroborated by the united voice of our commanders, of the public at large, and of the Court of Examiners themselves. I will not add, that it is also confirmed by the petition of the *Delegates*; but leave it to my adversary, to appeal to that respectable authority.

Our author informs us, that the authority of the Court of Examiners was too limited to be effectual. This might have been true, with regard to all but army and navy surgeons. All navy surgeons have been examined by them from time immemorial, and all army surgeons for about fifty years past; as the framers of the late bill

bill confess, and even boast, in their defence of that bill, sent round to the house of every Peer. In that paper they assert, that they have for many years examined all surgeons and mates for the army and navy; and, they hope, with advantage to the public, and credit to themselves. Perhaps they meant to say, with advantage to themselves: that it has not been with advantage to the public, the united voices of all men cry aloud.

In order to recommend their bill to the Legislature, at its first introduction, they had recourse to the pitiful expedient of a false allegation, and pretended they had examined surgeons and mates for the army, navy, and other foreign service, gratis. The fact is, that, like father Paul, they do not immediately touch the money; but it is put into the aggregate fund, from whence every Examiner draws a fee every day of examination, besides a good dinner. Such are the disinterested services rendered to the public by the Court of Examiners; and such their peace-offering, to reconcile the Legislature to the Surgeons' bill!

But we are informed by this author, that the power of that Court was too limited to be effectual. I suppose he means, effectual for making them Nabobs. That it was effectual enough to enable them to do a vast deal of mischief, his pub-

lication bears ample testimony ; since it shows, that, for the sake of self-interest, they had deluged the army, navy, and the whole empire, with despicable pretenders. Perhaps he means, they had not *the power* to refuse the qualification fee : in other respects it is to be lamented, that the Legislature did not sooner set limits to their power, or they to their inordinate avarice and ambition.

Besides other advantages accruing to the Examiners, directly or indirectly, for granting diplomas and qualifications, five or six guineas were paid by every surgeon and mate examined at extra courts ; which urgent service frequently rendered necessary. This sum was divided among the Examiners ; so that each Examiner has been known to receive seven or eight guineas a day for his share. Whether they considered this tender as a bribe, or not, it is difficult to determine : it is certain, however, they always *pocketed the affront*.

If the design of the institution of the Court of Examiners was, to protect society from ignorance and empiricism, it is rather surprising they should not discover, in less than fifty years, that they are not armed by the late act of Parliament with any power to prevent all the quacks in the kingdom from murdering his Majesty's liege subjects

subjects as fast as they can. It is true, an old charter gave that power; but then it was ordained, that the members of the Corporation should be examined before the Bishop of London, by certain persons described in that charter:—a provision which the Examiners themselves have not complied with; a provision rendered obsolete by disuse, and superseded by the late act. If, however, our author's assertions, their own assertions, and the assertions of all the world, are true, some Bishop, or at least some man of honour and conscience, ought to preside over their examinations, in order to prevent the public from being any longer imposed on.

Our author tells us, that the necessity for some reform, in this respect, is too apparent to be contradicted; and, indeed, this assertion is so true, and his proofs are so strong, that I shudder while I repeat them. But although there is too much truth in the relation, he has overcharged the picture; he has neglected to make the proper exceptions.

Speaking of the army and navy, How, says he, has the service been supplied with mates? (under which term he seems to include surgeons also.) “How has the service been supplied with
“mates?—From the hospitals of Great Britain,
“the proper seminaries of chirurgical know-
F 2 “ledge?

“ledge? No!—From the private abodes or
 “domestic tuition of respectable surgeons?
 “No!—How then have they originated? Why,
 “from the shops of apothecaries! discarded ap-
 “prentices, and uneducated porters! But a far
 “greater number of them, needy adventurers
 “from the North!—Scotch graduates, that
 “never saw a dissection, or even handled a
 “knife! Precious fellows to be entrusted with
 “lopping off legs and arms in a battle!”

The education of these Scotch graduates, he
 tells us, is this: “They come to town as ig-
 “norant and as *rusticated*, (*risum teneatis?*) as
 “peasants. They walk an hospital, if they can
 “afford it, for three months, during which time
 “they acquire a little technical phraseology;
 “and with this superficial instruction, they fall
 “forth as mates, to distribute life and death to
 “the miserable victims of war.” Are these things
 so? If they are, what a reproach to the Court of
 Examiners, who, by certifying their ability, give
 these *destroying angels* their commission! for no
 surgeon is employed in the public service till his
 abilities are certified by the Court of Examiners!

“It is,” he adds, “a notorious truth, that at
 “sea they amputate like the barbarians of Abyf-
 “finia; only with this difference, that they use
 “a knife instead of a hatchet. For the truth of
 “this,

“ *this*, I appeal to the testimony of all the naval
 “ officers, and to the petition of the *Delegates* !
 “ Good God !” he adds, “ are the lives of his
 “ Majesty’s seamen, the *invulnerable* bulwarks
 “ and main palladium of our strength, to be
 “ idly sacrificed, to please a junto, or pamper
 “ the spleen of a faction ?” I answer, No : they
 ought neither to be sacrificed to please a self-
 elected junto, who undergo *no test of ability*, nor
 to pamper the luxury of a Court of Examiners,
 at their *new Banqueting House in Lincoln’s Inn*
Fields.

But it has been said, How are the army and
 navy to be supplied with surgeons in time of
 war ? I answer, By encouraging the cultivation
 of the science in time of peace. For no man can
 be so stupid as to imagine, that when war is
 proclaimed at Charing Cross, a multitude of able
 surgeons will spring up at Surgeons’ Hall like
 mushrooms. It ought to be remarked, that
 surgeons and mates are not sent to Surgeons’
 Hall, as paupers to a magistrate, to be *passed*,
 but to be *examined* ; a circumstance which the
 Court of Examiners will do well in future to
 remember.

It appears, however, that if the Examiners
 have not sufficient power to promote the proper
 education of the army and navy surgeons, they
 have.

have sufficient power to prevent it; and have exercised that power with success. Having, from their engagements, as hospital surgeons and Examiners, and the prejudice entertained by the public in favour of those who fill such offices, no leisure for the extensive practice of physic or pharmacy, they endeavour to disparage those who have more opportunity and more ability; lest they also should reap advantage from their situations, and prevent the elect from drawing all the best practice into their vortex. What rational motive can a young surgeon have, to cultivate the study of pharmacy or of physic, when perhaps his knowledge must again be laid by, like an old man of war, after the next campaign; or he will be rendered for ever incapable of attaining the highest honours in his profession! If the present plan of the Court of Examiners be tolerated, Government must employ a physician as well as a surgeon, in every ship, and in every regiment; or be answerable for all the dreadful consequences that shall ensue.

If those who are sent to Surgeons' Hall for examination are not qualified, the Examiners should not, for the sake of sordid lucre, certify that they are, and thereby impose on Government, and sign the *death-warrants* of our brave soldiers and seamen. But we are told by this author, that our seamen are an *invulnerable* bulwark. Perhaps,
he

he means *impregnable* : but it is to be hoped he will add a dictionary to the next edition of his work, as a clue to guide us through the labyrinth of his absurdities. If our gallant seamen are really invulnerable, the expense of examinations at Surgeons' Hall, and of surgeons to cut and slash them, and lop off their legs, is unnecessary. But, alas ! the records of Greenwich Hospital, and even the records of our naval victories, tell another tale !

It is the fashion to extol our sailors and overlook our soldiers, as of little or no consequence : and our author follows the fashion. This partiality is pregnant with ingratitude and injustice ; and arises from a predilection for our invincible bulwark, and an antipathy to continental wars. Whether this predilection and this antipathy are well founded or not, is a question for statesmen to decide ; but can neither augment nor diminish the merit of the seaman or of the soldier, who have an equal claim on our gratitude, and equally deserve all the assistance which their country can afford, to alleviate the hardships of war.

Nor ought those surgeons who expose themselves to the danger of pestilential disease, and acquit themselves with credit in the service of their country, to be forgotten. After sharing the calamities and suffering the miseries of war,

in order to establish their fame, and obtain an honourable asylum in their native land, shall they be disappointed at their return? Shall they be refused an asylum, earned by their labours, merited by their services, and guaranteed to them by Parliament? Shall they, when they anchor on their native shore, be told that the Court of Examiners, who thought them fit to practise when *inexperienced*, are doubtful whether they are fit to practise when *experienced*? Shall they be told, that men living in ease and affluence, are afraid of encroachments on their practice? that the Court of Examiners are troubled with scruples of conscience; that they feel compunction and remorse, for having let loose such a set of ruffians to butcher our brave men? that their rest is disturbed and their slumbers are broken by dreadful dreams, and the frightful apparitions of our murdered seamen; and that nothing can quiet their conscience and allay their fears, but *an additional fee of twenty-eight pounds*?

What if our surgeon should have imbibed a little of the spirit of a British tar, and should disdain to submit to an unjust exaction, even though sanctioned by act of Parliament? What if he were to be rejected by the Examiners, through spleen or jealousy? or if he were shipwrecked and lost his property, or squandered it in an improvident manner, as seamen squander
their

their own property, and the Examiners and Court of Assistants of the Surgeons' Company squander the property of others, and had not sufficient left to pay the fees? In either of these cases, the Surgeons' bill would, as our author truly asserts, provide for him *a final and lasting recompense*, and a domestic settlement; a settlement *in a workhouse!*

Will it, continues our author, be any extenuation of our guiltiness, either in the present or succeeding ages, that we have been prevented from doing an act of humanity, because it was repugnant to the principles of your Lordship? Here again he pretends, that Lord Thurlow has prevented them from acquiring or exercising the power of examining surgeons for the public service; a pretence which he knows to be utterly void of foundation, and which again proves that he is no descendant of the *Evangelist*.

After insinuating that Government cares less for a man than for a horse, and sacrifices the lives of our wounded men to save the expense of their maintenance, for which purpose the surgeons whom he describes are admirably qualified, all of whom are examined and approved of at the Hall; he again begins defaming Lord Thurlow, whom he compares to the black serpent of India, which is said to contain within

his head an antidote for his own poison. Our author himself is like the viper, whose fat is an antidote for his venom ; and, like the viper, he has been so unlucky as to *bite a file*.

He complains that Lord Thurlow does not show sufficient respect to surgeons, and exclaims with Satan,

“ Not to know us argues yourselves unknown.”

He should have said yourself, or rather thyself. The noble Lord whom he calumniates, has no title to the plural character of duplicity ; he leaves that for his Dresher and Co. who bring in a bill for their own aggrandisement, and pretend it is for the public good.

Lord Thurlow declared, that, whatever his opinion of surgeons was before, he entertained less respect for them on account of the late bill brought in by the author of the *Dressing* and his associates. If any thing can increase his contempt for the professors of the art, this vile Grubstreet attack, this exposure of the principles of the late bill, must increase it.

After acquainting us that the Court of Examiners have hitherto constituted the tribunal for the examination of surgeons, and that an ignorant, untutored

untutored banditti of mohawk surgeons have been let loose to mangle and mutilate our brave tars, he laments that Lord Thurlow has prevented him and his associates from doing an act of humanity; that is, extorting more money from the distributors of death in our army and navy. If he and his colleagues have not hitherto done an act of humanity, they were not prevented by Lord Thurlow, or any other Lord, but by their own fordid propensities, which could not resist the temptation of *getting rich by degrees*.

He affirms, that if a potentate in any distant, but polished empire, should read Lord Thurlow's harangue, he would conclude, either that the English were barbarians, or the orator a madman. He adds, that if his Lordship is so deficient in information, it is necessary he should be told, that surgery has been highly cultivated in this country; and that the *English* surgeons have been respectable *ever since the institution of the French academy*. The English, he says, prone to adopt, and best calculated to improve it, seized the embryo, nursed it with industry, and have brought it near to perfection. Such, he says, has been our chirurgical fame, that the sovereigns of Europe send their surgeons to us for education; and that at the assembly of allies on the continent, the German, Hanoverian, and Prussian soldiers, had eminent surgeons, in-

structed at English seminaries, while the brave British were suffering perpetual martyrdom from the defect of science in their countrymen. The truth of this statement let the Examiners controvert, by whose certificate of qualification those barbarians, whom he describes, are recommended to Government for making martyrs of our soldiery, and exercising the knife instead of the tomahawk.

It will be astonishing, after this, if Lord Thurlow should persist in his opinion that surgeons, as a body, are not respectable: nay, it will be rank heresy. He ought to be flayed alive, and a lecture should be given on him at Surgeons' Hall. But, alas! they have no theatre! One of the volumes belonging to that learned society should be bound up in his skin; but, alas! they have no library!

It is happy for England, that foreigners exalt her chirurgical fame, since her own conduct and her own public institution tend to degrade it. Our author has given two proofs that surgery is on a respectable footing in *England*. First, an academy of surgery is instituted in *France*; and, secondly, the *Prussians* have better surgeons in their armies than the *English*: a third proof, full as good as the others, might be adduced, viz.

viz. the Austrians have lately improved the sword-exercise.

If surgery is become respectable in England, it is not owing to the spirit of monopoly in the Corporation, but to the ingenuity of individuals. The most important improvement made of late, or perhaps ever made, in that profession, is that of healing by the first intention in the greater operations, and particularly in the flap operation for the leg; an improvement which preserves the use of the joint of the knee. This was discovered and practised at Liverpool, Manchester, &c. and afterwards introduced into this metropolis, not by examining surgeons, but by *students in bell-metal mortars*,

It was owing to the disgraceful conduct of some of the practitioners of surgery, that the science itself did not appear respectable in the eyes of Lord Thurlow. That learned Lord felt a just indignation at the clandestine and indecent manner in which the bill was brought into Parliament; the gross misrepresentations by which it was supported; the mean manœuvres by which it was hurried on; and the scandalous overbearing influence by which it was likely to succeed, in opposition to the clearest evidence of its injustice. He was likewise offended at the shameful conduct of the Examiners, in polluting the residence of a respectable society of the law with the bodies
of

of malefactors. He was also displeased at the personal injury which he had received from an unskilful surgeon; who would not agree to call in another, to do what he was unable to accomplish himself. Incensed by such provocations, he did not make a sufficient distinction in the heat of debate, between the professors and the profession. His remarks tended to degrade the science of surgery, as well as the surgeon. He considered the practical part, and not the theoretical; the operative part, and not the curative or preventive. That knowledge which qualifies a surgeon to deliberate and advise, may be called a science; the dexterity and address which he displays in manual operations, an art. Whether the slanderer of Lord Thurlow be right or wrong, in asserting that surgery has been highly cultivated in this country, it is certain that it is not, as he avers, brought near to perfection. If it is, what excuse can the Examiners make, for overwhelming the army and navy with discarded apprentices and porters?

When his Lordship has coolly and impartially considered the subject, I think it impossible that he should not acknowledge a science, on which so great a share of human happiness in every rank of life depends, worthy of every respect and encouragement. But this conclusion can only be granted, on condition that neither an

extent or variety of talents should be an exclusion, nor partial interests or modes of election suffered to prevail. While such mockery of justice is allowed, neither the College of *invalids* at Chelsea, nor the College of *old women* at Bromley, will want a rival.

But we are told by our intelligent author, that Lord Thurlow's information is superficial, and that it is surprising he can so soon have forgotten, that the Legislature has lately conferred on farriers, what they now refuse to surgeons; and he ascribes a share of the blame to his Lordship; who, he says, either by his vote or acquiescence, sanctioned that measure. Hence he maintains, his Lordship shows more feeling for a horse than for a man. But the truth is, that the Veterinary College was not founded by the Legislature, but by private persons. It has been occasionally supported by legislative grants, such as an infant institution demands, and an important establishment deserves. It is our author who wishes to justify the Examiners, who have overwhelmed the whole empire with ignorant pretenders to surgery, that shows less feeling for a man, than the supporters of the Veterinary College have shown for a horse.

Our author gives no account of the number of foreign surgeons instructed at English seminaries; and

and brings no evidence to support his allegation. It is, in short, too absurd to deserve a serious refutation: we might as well try to refute the rhodomontade of Gulliver's Travels. It is, however, not improper to remind him, that most surgeons who go abroad, only travel to finish their education; and it by no means follows, that they find better instructions abroad than at home. It is the height of imposition to pretend, that the great mass of surgeons attending the allied armies on the Continent, were educated in England: nor is it an easy task to convince us, that those German Princes who take so much care to procure good surgeons, wish to destroy their wounded men, in order to avoid the expense of maintaining them; or that the *Electors of Hanover* is more anxious to provide good surgeons for his army, than the *King of Great Britain*.

When we are told by this author, that the surgeons who are approved of for our fleets and armies by the Examiners, lop off legs after the Abyssinian mode, only with a knife instead of a hatchet, we can easily account how the Examiners have established their chirurgical fame. It was natural for the sovereigns of Europe to suppose, that the Examiners were still more able amputators than their pupils, who had just passed an examination, and could outdo even what
they

they saw our younger surgeons perform abroad. *Quid domini facient, audent cum talia fures?* Our author's words are these: Such, let me tell you, has been our chirurgical fame, that the sovereigns of Europe, in imitation of the Russian Czar, have sent their surgeons to us for education. When we consider the merit of their pupils, and the miraculous exploits which they have achieved in every part of the globe, we cannot wonder that their Tutors and Examiners should receive glory from *reflection*. We cannot wonder that their renown is gone forth into all lands, and their names unto the ends of the world.

But whatever may be their chirurgical fame, let me advise them to give the public no cause to suspect the justice of their official conduct; no longer to invade the privileges of the Corporation; no longer to obtain money under false pretences; no longer to threaten with heavy fines those whom the law does not prohibit to practise; no longer by intimidation to extort upwards of twenty-eight pounds from army and navy surgeons, whom the law allows to practise. Should they continue such illegal exactions, their fame may be farther extended; *their Honours* may cross *the line*, or *their Worship*s may reach *Botany Bay*.

H

After

After expatiating on the horrid cruelties exercised on our brave soldiers and seamen, our author adds, "State emergencies, or the calamities of war, might have reconciled us even to this." Dean Swift observes, that it is wonderful with what philosophy we bear the misfortunes of other people. State emergencies, says our author, or the calamities of war, might have reconciled us even to this : but the evil was more extensive ; for these men, on the return of peace, thrust themselves on the bosom of society, and commit the same enormities in domestic practice, that they have been accustomed to exercise on the continent and the ocean. *Aye, there's the rub* : he tells us, that those precious fellows lop the limbs of our brave seamen, and butcher them in the most horrid manner ; yet he could be reconciled to this, and from the safe shore behold their floating carcases, with manly patience and Christian resignation. But when *peace* comes, he fears they might encroach on his practice ; that they might be so audacious as to thrust themselves on the *bosom* of society ; nay, and even to settle in the very heart of the town. But what has he to fear from such rivals, even if any of them are men of abilities, since he informs us, mankind *cannot discriminate* ? And what have the public to fear from surgeons, in whom he assures us they will place no confidence ?

If

If a sufficient number of competent surgeons do not offer themselves for the public service, that is not the fault of the Examiners; but it is the most horrid of all crimes, to let loose a set of desperadoes, to sacrifice the lives of our brave defenders, and to destroy those whom the sword has spared. If good surgeons were wanting, it was the duty of Government to employ the best they could procure; but it was the duty of the Court of Examiners to reject the bad; and not, for the sake of perquisites, approve and recommend those, whom they afterwards declare unqualified. But thus it will ever be, while human nature is corrupt, if men are suffered to have an interest in doing wrong.—The Examiners ought to have a fixed salary; and a sum proportioned to their salary should be deducted for non-attendance; but they should not be suffered to sell indulgences and dispensations, for the shedding of innocent blood.

If the assertions of the author of the Dressing be true, these censures are not severe; but, I believe, he has exaggerated a real grievance. What, then, can give rise to such a false accusation, and such a foul aspersion? Self-interest.—The same sordid motives, which tempted the Examiners at first to admit those surgeons, and to certify their qualification, now tempt them to deny it. First they came with an irresistible

argument in their hands; with a metal which strikes its beholders with blindness: now they come without that fascinating oblation. First they came young and inexperienced; but now they come as experienced practitioners, formidable opponents, and rival candidates for fortune and for fame.

From the confident manner in which our Bo-badil boasts of his knowledge and that of his confederates, it might be imagined that all learning is centred in them, and all improvements flow from them. *We*, says he, could have discriminated genius; *we* could have selected it from the common mass of empiricism, and have recommended it to notice. But *mankind* cannot discriminate, and therefore will confide only in *men like us*, made eminent by successful practice, and sanctioned by general approbation. Alas! by his own account, mankind have confided in them to their cost! They, who, it seems, are not a part of mankind, but a superior order of beings, have an exclusive faculty of discriminating genius, and power of recommending it to notice. These endowments have displayed themselves in a singular manner during the present war; in which the geniuses discriminated and recommended by them have, according to our author, inflicted perpetual martyrdom on our brave soldiers and sailors; and sallied forth, like so many

dæmons,

dæmons, to distribute death to the miserable victims of war. *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.* If our author's account is accurate, and his picture not overcharged, the Examiners need not care whether the sovereigns of Europe have heard of their chirurgical fame or not, since they will have such a *noble army of martyrs* to praise them.

But in order that their chirurgical and medical fame may proceed *passibus æquis*, and stand an equal chance of being transmitted to posterity, and an equal chance of attaining immortality, I will insert a prescription, which I have just been favoured with by a medical friend of great discrimination, written by one of that learned corps;—a prescription of a composition which may justly be called a catholicon, both because it is as likely to cure one disease as another, and because the publication of it may be of universal advantage to mankind. To render it the more extensively useful, I shall publish it in English. Take of conserve of orange-peel six drachms, cinabar of antimony, gum guaiacum, and powder of valerian, of each two drachms and a half, milk of sulphur, and powder of tin, of each three drachms, diuretic salt, and powder of ginger, of each one drachm, camphor (dissolved in spirit), fifteen grains, syrup of ginger as much as is sufficient to make an electuary. Any panegyric on
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the author of this prescription would be useless.
Suffice it to say,

Cedite Romani doctores, cedite Graii,
Nescio quid majus nascitur Hippocrate.

I myself have known the following mixture directed for an inflammatory fever, by one of the same learned body :—Take of salt of wormwood one drachm, lemon-juice a sufficient quantity, water four ounces, fyrop two drachms, *spirit of nutmegs two ounces*.—Not to compliment the author of the above incomparable prescription with a distich, would argue insensibility of extraordinary merit.

Namque ad supremum perducta scientia culmen,
In te stat, nec quo progrediatur habet.

Aided by such allies, Death has enlarged her bounds; and Empiricism rides triumphantly in his gilded car.—Barbers and surgeons have dissolved partnership; and surgeons and undertakers have formed a coalition. Such are the members of the tribunal that examines our medical men for the army and navy; the sovereigns of Europe will hear of their fame, and our *enemies* will pray for their *long life* and *prosperity*.

As to the *par nobile fratrum*, those twin stars who shine with such unrivalled lustre, I must
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compliment them in conjunction with one couplet at parting :

Fortunati ambo ! si quid mea carmina possunt,
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo.

It is known to most surgeons, that the present Examiners have neither been the first to make improvements in the practice of surgery, nor the first to adopt them : neither have they been remarkable for electing men of merit. John Hunter himself never was chosen an Examiner ; and notwithstanding a sneer thrown out in a daily paper against dentists, could he have obtained a seat in that court, he would have had no objection to meet his old friend Mr. Spence there. Dr. Hunter, who was likewise a member of the Corporation, if he had lived till this time, would have been excluded from that situation, by an illiberal and invidious bye-law. Several of the first surgeons, anatomists, and medical characters of the present age, labour under the same unnatural disability, that of knowing *too much* ; an insuperable bar to a seat in that *learned society*.

I have heard of some surgeons, who thanked God they knew nothing of physic : I was glad to hear that they thanked God for any thing : their heads, I presume, are so overcharged with surgery,

furgery, that any congenial auxiliar art would only be deemed an intruder.—I have heard of others, friends and supporters of the late iniquitous bill, who pride themselves on account of their not practising pharmacy: these gentlemen boast of having *clean hands*; which is a lucky circumstance, as they have lately been doing a vast deal of *dirty work*.

The very attempt to bereave the Corporation of their privileges and property, and army and navy surgeons of their stipulated rewards, by an *ex post facto* law, and to sanction robbery by act of Parliament, was a *black act*. The author of *The Dressing for Lord Thurlow* affects great concern for the welfare of the public, and looks forward to the arrival of peace with horror, on account of the crew of unskilful surgeons who will then seek for a domestic settlement. Were his apprehensions real, it would only prove him to be destitute of common sense; for it is certainly much safer to trust an ignorant surgeon on shore, where he can call in able practitioners in consultation, than on board a ship, where he cannot always have other assistance, and in a battle, where mature judgment and prompt decision are necessary.

Our author is offended with Lord Thurlow, for descanting with some acrimony on the humble

ble origin of the Corporation of Surgeons, and observes, that the Nile itself is collected from single rivulets.—His own ill-begotten performance reminds us of the *headless trunks* and unshapely monsters found on its banks.—He affirms, that a barber must, in the nature of things, be an unchangeable and unimprovable animal. If so, our author, who is a great *block-head*, would have been *quite the barber*: he would have been a *peruke maker to a hair*. The sovereigns of the Barbers' Company would have heard of his tonforial fame, and his name would have resounded *from pole to pole*.

He informs Lord Thurlow, that besides anatomy and physiology,—chemistry, pharmacy, and botany, form a part of the education of surgeons. This proves, that some of the offspring of the Barbers' Company may still boast of their original characteristics. They are unchangeable and unimprovable animals. *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*.—After loading students in bell-metal mortars with the most illiberal sarcasms, and trying to disparage them by the most insolent reproaches, he tells us, that *he himself is a student in bell-metal mortars!* How unfortunate it is, that the art of memory did not also make a part of his education; or that he did not avail himself of his botanical knowledge, and take some hellebore *to purge his brain!* But,

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alas!

alas! the greatest physicians are not always able to cure themselves: *Nec domino profunt quæ profunt omnibus artes!*

If this author has studied pharmacy, he disgraces his profession. But what shall we say to those, who exclude men for practising what it is their duty to study; and for practising openly and honestly, what they clandestinely practise themselves? If hospital surgeons have not time to study or practise, to any considerable extent, the united branches of physic and surgery, is there any reason, why they should compel those who have more time and more ability to forego that advantage, and deprive the public of their service? Is it reasonable, or prudent, to require the army or navy surgeon, to treasure up all the knowledge he can cull from education and experience, and then to rob the public and himself of the fruit of all his labours? Is it politic to decree, that he should suffer his medical and pharmaceutical talents to rust in time of peace; or else that he should be prohibited from rising to rank in the Corporation; and examining the candidates for an office, which he himself has already discharged with honour?

Our author talks about Alexander the Great, Lord Thurlow, and rolls of parchment.—A roll of parchment may be converted into an engine
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of destruction, either by the soldier or the lawyer; either in the shape of a *deed* or of a *drum*. These are pernicious to the present generation; but let it be converted into an act of Parliament, called *A Surgeons' Bill*, to quench the flame of science, and to sanctify plunder and oppression, and it becomes a curse to all posterity.—Our author tells Lord Thurlow, that those who read Hippocrates, will be surprised at not finding him among his diseases. The author and his friends will find a great resemblance of him in the disease called *the plague*; for to them he certainly is such. But the profound physician even there contemplates the salutary design of nature; and admires the powerful instrument she employs, to expel something noxious from the body. That instrument is a type of the generous ardour displayed by the noble Peer, when he expelled that noxious venom called *The Surgeons' Bill* from the House of Lords, and from all civilized society.

Our author alleges, that if the members of his community had been bred lawyers, they might have been able to cajole a jury.—That a lawyer of talents should sometimes attempt to cajole a jury, is not at all surprising; but it is really surprising, that a man who wants that advantage, should attempt to cajole *the oracles*

of law; to cajole *Lord Thurlow himself*, and the whole *Parliament of Great Britain*.

He tells us of a lawyer, who, when blind-folded, happened undesignedly to worship the devil: but he does not tell us of any one, who was so wicked as to worship him with his eyes open; or so foolish as to prepare *Birch* for his own back.

He says, If we cannot arouse you by policy, let us awaken you by a sense of moral propriety. By this he appears not to understand, that *honesty is the best policy*.—Had he learnt this useful maxim, it might have preserved his cause from exposure; his abilities from derision; and himself from contempt.

Our author tells *Lord Thurlow*, he is not so vain as to think, that his letter will make any impression on a mind like his Lordship's; yet he tries to awaken him by a *sense of moral propriety*. Of our author's *sense* it is easy to form an estimate, from his voluntarily submitting to the talk of *labour in-vain*.

Weak indeed, and grossly depraved, must a mind be, that can receive any impression, but that of scorn, from such a letter.—How far a sense of moral propriety should reconcile any one

one to the principles of the Surgeons' Bill, the public may judge, from perusing the following Petition of a majority of the Corporation, presented to the House of Lords.

The HUMBLE PETITION of the Petitioning Members of the Corporation of Surgeons of London, on behalf of themselves, and other Members of the said Corporation,

SHEWETH,

THAT there is now a bill depending in the House of Lords, entitled, " A Bill for erecting
" the Corporation of Surgeons of London into a
" College; and for continuing and confirming
" to such College certain rights, privileges, and
" immunities;"—by which it appears, that certain persons, nineteen in number, (eleven of whom are the petitioners for the said bill,) being the present Master, Wardens, and a part of the Court of Assistants of the said Company of Surgeons, together with two other persons, to be named by the said nineteen, are to have the absolute supervisal and control of all the concerns of the said College, during the term of their respective lives; and to have vested exclusively
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in them all the lands, tenements, monies, stocks, and revenues, and other effects, belonging to your petitioners, and other members of the said Corporation of Surgeons; and also to have the unlimited power of making bye-laws for the government of the said Corporation.

That the commonalty of the said Corporation, of which your petitioners are a part, are the proprietors of all the lands, tenements, monies, stocks, revenues, and other effects of the said Corporation; and which cannot lawfully be alienated from them but by their own consent in a general court of the said commonalty.

That, according to the ancient constitution of the Barbers, as granted and established by charter of the first of his late Majesty King Edward the Fourth, the governors of the said Corporation were chosen by and out of the commonalty of the said Corporation; and the said governors, and the said commonalty, were empowered to make statutes and ordinances for the good government of the same.

That, by an act of the 32d of King Henry the Eighth, which incorporated the Barbers and Surgeons, these privileges were confirmed; and one of the reasons assigned by the said act for the said incorporation was, that the said Surgeons
might

might often assemble together for the good and due order, exercise, and knowledge in the science or faculty of surgery.

That a charter was granted by his late Majesty King James the First, to the said Corporation of Barbers and Surgeons, constituting four governors and twenty-four assistants; the governors to be elected annually by and out of the said assistants, who were appointed for life.

That the said governors and assistants were empowered to make good and reasonable by-laws for the government of the said commonalty.

That, by an act passed in the eighteenth year of the reign of King George the Second, the Corporation of Barbers and Surgeons was divided into separate corporations.

That the said act likewise appointed a master, two wardens, ten examiners, and twenty-one assistants, of the Corporation of Surgeons; the said master and wardens to be annually elected by and out of the said assistants, who, as well as the said examiners, were appointed for life.

That the said act empowered the said master and wardens, or any two of them, with nine or more of the said assistants, to make, ordain, revoke,

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consequence of, and under the authority of the last-recited act.

That the said petitioners (originally eleven in number) for the bill now depending before your Lordships, being the Master, Wardens, and part of the Court of Assistants aforesaid, did petition the Honourable the House of Commons, as well as your Lordships, for the said bill, without convening your petitioners, or any part of the said commonalty of the said Corporation, or giving the least notification, in any manner or form whatsoever, to your petitioners, or any part of the said commonalty, that such a measure was in contemplation, or such a bill solicited: and the said bill had actually passed through the Honourable the House of Commons, and had been twice read in this Right Honourable House, and afterwards committed, and was ready to be reported, before your petitioners knew or heard of the clauses or contents of the said bill.

That your petitioners, being 178 in number, on hearing of the same, humbly petitioned your Lordships, that the said bill might not pass into a law; when your Lordships were pleased to order the said bill to be re-committed.

That evidence was produced before the Right

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Honourable Committee, to whom the said bill was so referred.

That it appears, from the said evidence, that the said Master, Wardens, and Assistants, have alienated the property of the commonalty aforesaid, to a large amount, without their knowledge or consent.

That they have, as also appears from the said evidence, made purchases, of a very improvident nature, of freehold property, and greatly beyond the extent allowed by law ;—so much so, that the said estate cannot be held by the said Corporation, but stands now in the name of trustees : and stock in the funds, to the amount of 9,000*l.* and upwards, was sold out at 58*l. per cent.* which cost the said Corporation, upon an average, 76*l. per cent.* in order to make such purchase.

That it further appears by the same evidence, and is especially confirmed by a minute, or protest, entered upon the records of the said Corporation, by John Gunning, Esq. the then Master of the said Corporation, that gross mal-administration did then, and had, for some time previous thereto, prevailed in the affairs of the said Corporation.—That large and unnecessary sums were expended on dinners for the Court of Assistants.—That the said Court had raised their
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own former fees, and added others thereto.—
 That their accounts were not duly audited.—
 That their library was without books, and their
 theatres without lectures.—That they had neither
 instituted lectures in surgery or anatomy of any
 importance, although certain legacies or bequests
 had been professedly appropriated for that pur-
 pose.—That they had held out no reward to
 rising merit; and that the futile attempts which
 they had made towards the promotion of the said
 sciences, although found in the end to be totally
 inadequate and ineffectual, had yet been shame-
 fully expensive.

That it further appears, by evidence, that the
 Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants have,
 since the passing the said act of the 18th of
 George the Second, received, in fees, quarterages,
 and by other means, 80,000*l.* and upwards,
 although, during that period, they do not ap-
 pear to have taken any one material step for the
 public good, or for the advancement of the
 science of surgery.

That it further appears, that the said Exa-
 miners have, during the said period, received for
 their own private use 16,000*l.* and upwards, al-
 though the petitioners for the bill, in their peti-
 tion, state themselves to have examined all per-
 sons offering themselves as candidates for sur-
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geons or surgeons' mates in his Majesty's service, and the East India Company's service, without any recompense whatever,

That it appears in evidence, that few, if any, of the abuses so complained of, (though near seven years have elapsed since the recording of the said minute or protest,) have been remedied or attempted to be remedied.

That it is apparent, as well from the said evidence, as from certain resolutions of the said Corporation which have been erased, interlined, and altered, subsequent to the passing of the same, that the real object of the said bill is to obtain, from the Legislature, an act of indemnification for certain informal and illegal proceedings, although it professes only to have in view the better regulation of the practice of surgery.

That the said bill, if passed into a law, will operate most injuriously to your petitioners, and the rest of the said commonalty of the said Company of Surgeons, in the following, among other particulars, viz.

It gives to the same identical persons, (but under different titles and denominations,) whose mal-administration of their present powers has been thus fully proved, absolute supervisal and control over your petitioners, and their affairs
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and interests as members of the said Corporation. It annihilates all their present privileges, and takes from the commonalty their ancient right of meeting in a general court, however urgent or important the occasion may be. It vests in the same persons, (subject to no control or inquiry on the part of the commonalty,) all the lands, tenements, rents and revenues, monies and stocks, of the said Corporation. It gives to the said persons, power to choose, in future, a lecturer from their own body, with a suitable stipend, although, according to the present laws of the said Corporation, the lecturer, or lecturers, are to be chosen from the members of the Corporation at large. It obliges your petitioners solemnly to swear to the observance of such laws and ordinances as may be enacted by the said persons, however obnoxious, unjust, and impolitic they may be, although the said commonalty are to have no voice in the said laws, or choice in the appointment of those who make them.

As the said bill now stands, it will operate as a ratification, or legalization, of certain alienations, purchases, and other acts, made and done by the said persons, injurious to your petitioners, and the said Corporation, and, (as they are advised,) contrary to the law of the land. It ratifies, and confirms indiscriminately, all the present

sent bye-laws of the said Corporation, although the said bye-laws are not set out in the said bill, and some of them contain distinctions between different branches of surgery, and prohibitions respecting the same, as illegal, (as your petitioners are advised,) in their foundation, as they are odious in their principle, and unjust in their operation.

That your petitioners humbly apprehend the said bill to be as defective in public policy, as it is pregnant with private injury.

That changing the titles of the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants, which are mere municipal distinctions, into others, importing collegiate rank, and to which no eminence of skill, diligence, or talents, can elevate the members of the Corporation at large, must not only check and destroy that emulation, upon which perfection in all science depends; but exposes the members at large to disgraceful comparisons, dishonourable and derogatory to the feelings of any body of learned and enlightened men.

That those who are to succeed the said persons in the ranks and distinctions alluded to, namely, the President, Vice Presidents, Censors, and Counsellors, are not called upon for any testimonial of ability, any public proof of their skill
and

and learning, or emulative contest of superior talent, with the rest of the members of the said College, previous to their election, but are merely to be nominated by their predecessors, as interest or connexion may incline.

That the said bill does not provide for any regular system of improvement in the science of surgery, or hold out any species of encouragement or reward to rising merit; the lectures provided for in the said bill, being but few in number, and at an improper season of the year.

That, notwithstanding the evidence before alluded to, has proved the present revenues of the Corporation to be sufficiently ample, and equal to every fair and honourable purpose, being 2,000*l.* and upwards *per annum*, the present bill seeks to enlarge the jurisdiction of the petitioners for the bill, from seven to ten miles round London, for no other reason, as your petitioners can discover, but to swell the said revenues, by imposing an expense of near 30*l.* for a grand diploma, upon every person practising surgery in any degree whatever, within the said distance of ten miles, however humble the practitioner, or obscure the village in which he may reside; and by increasing the fine for so practising, without having obtained the said diploma, from five to ten pounds.

That your petitioners, having nothing more at heart, than the promotion of the honour of a profession, with which their own personal characters are so immediately identified, and anxious that some well-digested, and regulated systems, should be established, for a purpose so beneficial to the public, have repeatedly requested of the petitioners for the bill, that a deputation from your petitioners might wait on them for that purpose; but such their applications have not even been favoured with an answer.

That if your Lordships should think it expedient to interpose, by giving a new constitution to the surgeons, your petitioners entreat, from the wisdom and justice of your Lordships, such salutary provisions, as may preserve them from the prejudicial consequences resulting from the said bill; and create that emulative impulse to learning and skill, which it must necessarily destroy; and open to the profession at large, the possibility, prospect, and hope, of accomplishing the true ends of a liberal institution, and of participating in those professional honours and distinctions, which the petitioners for this bill seek exclusively for themselves, at the expense of that community, over whom they were appointed the guardians and protectors.

And your petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

Thus it appears, that the property *still* belongs to the members of the Corporation at large. The privileges of electing, and of being eligible, to all offices, *did* belong to them. The first was taken from them by *an act of Parliament*; the second, by *an act of the Legislature in the purview of Newgate*.

Then, as well as now, Parliament was imposed on: then, by the specious and plausible pretence of a bill, to separate the Surgeons from the Barbers' Company; now, by the pretence, equally specious and plausible, of a bill to erect the Corporation of Surgeons into a College. The aggrandisement of surgery,—this is the honied word that covers that deadly poison—*Despotism*; this is the rouge that adorns that hideous harlot—*Extortion*; this is the gilded pill, to make that bitter draught, *the Surgeons' Bill*, go down.

When the governors of the Surgeons' Company apply to Parliament for *new powers*, it is incumbent on them, at least, to point out *one power* already granted to them, which they have not abused. For applying to Parliament for an act, to erect the Corporation of Surgeons into a College, they may plead the example of the learned societies of Edinburgh and Dublin; for excluding medical science from their council,

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on compulsion, though to him guineas were “ as plenty as blackberries.”

When the Legislature of the Surgeons' Company passed an act, that every surgeon advanced to the dignity of a Serjeant Surgeon, should be elected an Examiner, and Master of the Company, perhaps they did not consult either the honour or interest of the Company ; as it is possible some future Lord Chamberlain, in whose department the appointment is said to be, may follow the example of Caligula, and appoint his horse ; or another animal, more celebrated for his *length of ears* than for his *wisdom*.

The Legislators of the Corporation were rather too obsequious, in their zeal to show their gratitude to the Court Surgeons, for their assistance and influence in procuring the Surgeons' bill of that day ; a bill which enabled them in future to elect themselves. This was a most absurd and unjust provision : for if they were the most select Surgeons of the Corporation, and the best judges of merit, nothing could more incontestably prove the propriety of continuing the privilege of election in the Corporation at large, and the flagrant injustice of robbing them of that right.

When the law-makers of the Corporation enacted a law to exclude those who practise pharmacy from office, they were altogether as fastidious. On a late occasion, these two laws have been found to clash, and have brought the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants, into a disagreeable dilemma. It is difficult to determine whether they showed more jurisprudence when they resolved to admit, or when they resolved to exclude; when they were too shy, or when they were too civil by half; when they were too ready to give the fraternal embrace, or when they were too ready to refuse it. Be that as it will, it was not an easy matter for them to extricate themselves from the dilemma. Two *such laws*, when jostling together, resemble two women of the town, fighting for precedence.

The Serjeant Surgeon at present excluded from the situation of Examiner, by a degrading and invidious bye-law, would reflect honour on any situation: but he is a singular instance of the caprice of fickle Fortune. She deigned to advance him to honour in the Court of Great Britain, but disdained to advance him to honour in the Court of Examiners at Surgeons' Hall.

When a Court of Examiners try to cast a *stir* on the character of such a man, they do not dishonour

honour him ; they dishonour themselves. Nevertheless, this *obstruction* to the preferment of a Serjeant Surgeon, in Surgeons' Hall, is an *evil* of the first magnitude : but there are certain State-doctors who are of opinion that the *evil* may be cured by the royal touch, and the *obstruction* by taking *penny royal*.

Besides five or six hundred members, who reside within the limits of the jurisdiction of the Corporation, there are above twelve hundred who have passed a similar examination, and are declared by the list annually published by the Court of Assistants, to be entitled to the several privileges, franchises, and immunities granted by the late act of Parliament to the Surgeons' Company : almost all of them practise pharmacy. Upon discharging the note which they give, as a security for paying the remaining half of the admission fine, they may receive the grand diploma, and be entitled to the privilege of residence, and the full advantage of the late act, and of all the charters of the Corporation. Of course, when the rights of the resident members are invaded, their rights are invaded also.

Many of those practitioners, dispersed through the various cities and towns of Great Britain, and over all parts of the globe, are in no respect second to the Examiners, or to any other members
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of the Corporation; but their abilities are confined to a more limited sphere of action. To many of them surgery is indebted for some of its principal improvements. An odious and illiberal bye-law, which debars such men from the prospect of preferment and eminence, if they think proper to settle in the metropolis, is like the baneful yew; it casts a malignant shade, and withers all around it. It raises the mist of prejudice, damps the ardour of emulation, blasts the hopes of success, and nips the blossoms of genius in the bud. It suspends animation, like the exhalations of the poison-tree; and extinguishes the lamp of science like mephitic air.

It has been suggested by a very eminent professor of the obstetric art, that as midwifery and pharmacy are so generally practised by surgeons, a certain number of practitioners should be elected to form two committees, for examining such surgeons as offer themselves for the practice of those branches of the medical profession, and granting diplomas to such as are found competent. This hint comes from a practitioner, so distinguished for professional talents and extensive information, that it deserves the most serious attention.

Among the numerous instances of the capricious and arbitrary disposition of the Court of

Examiners, it ought not to pass unnoticed, that they extended the clause of exclusion from their court to midwifery, from a pique against an individual; an hospital surgeon, and a man of unexceptionable abilities. By a like partial and tyrannical decision, they have excluded a *Wathen*, an excellent surgeon, and the first oculist of this age and nation. Perhaps it is not to their interest to render such transcendent merit still more conspicuous, or to make the public *more sharp-sighted!*

Latet anguis in herba! Jealousy has no small share in such transactions. If the chief object of their aim were the public good, a Cruikshank would not have been declared ineligible; a Hunter would not have been kept in the background; a Cline would not be condemned to waste the flower of his professional life in a Court of Assistants; the talents of an Abernethy would be brought forward in their bloom; and certain members of the Court, whose abilities, either through age or natural infirmities, are as dormant as the powers of the Corporation over which they preside, would lengthen the list of *yellow admirals*, and “*retire to their savin fields, to cultivate cabbages.*”

In regard to refusing the honours and distinctions of office, to a surgeon who devotes himself principally

principally to one branch of his profession, it appears to me impolitic, illiberal, and unjust, provided he excels in that branch, and in the sum of surgical knowledge. It is impolitic, because no discouragement or degradation ought to attend the ardent pursuits of a man, likely to improve his profession. It is illiberal, because every man should be at liberty to practise those branches of surgery for which he deems himself best qualified, and by which he thinks he can render the most essential service to the community. It is unjust, because it casts an impediment in the way of a practitioner; and hinders him from following, without disadvantage, the course which nature, and inclination, and the bent of his genius, point out.

As no man excels in all things, and as it is desirable to have every species of professional excellence in that Court, would it not be prudent to imitate the example of Phidias, and select from every quarter, talents the most exquisite in their kind? Thus, by frequent conversation, and mutual information, reciprocal improvement would take place; and general advantage to the profession, and to the public, be the final result.

If there be any branch of the medical profession, which, in the eyes of the Court of Examiners,

ers, may appear incongruous with the rank of an Examiner, whether it be pharmacy, or the practice of a dentist, oculist, aurist, or lithotomist, or the cure of the lues venerea, or the operation for the fistula, or the cure of any of the various ills that flesh is heir to, let such incongruity, and such incompatibility with the character of an Examiner, be declared at once, either by an act of Parliament, or by an unalterable resolution of the Court of Examiners of the Corporation, or Council of the College. If the dignity of the Court or Council be the prime object, it will be sufficiently consulted by passing a law, to prohibit such practices from the time of election to office: but let it not be an unsettled point, liable to perpetual variation, according to the whim or interest of the rulers of the Company.

Such has been their conduct hitherto, such the mismanagement of the affairs of the Corporation, and so little has the interest of the members in general been considered, that I have been asked by many of them, if I could inform them what privileges they enjoyed, and what advantage they derived from belonging to the Corporation. Some remarked, that they knew of no privileges belonging to the members at large, but the privileges of paying fines, and serving troublesome offices, while they are excluded from those which are lucrative. Such were not the least

ready to join in opposing an augmentation of power, in those who had so much abused what they possessed; knowing that they had nothing but new impositions and new oppressions to expect; and more to fear from their jealousy than to hope from their favour.

It is well known that surgery is greatly improved of late years, and much more cultivated than before. For this we are indebted to the Monroes and the Hunters, as well as to the many able professors of anatomy and surgery of the present day; most of whom, as well as of their pupils, are declared ineligible to the Court of Examiners. Thus they are rather degraded than honoured, by belonging to such an institution; and it is well known that the greater part of the members entered into the Company, not from any hopes of receiving benefits from being members of the Corporation, but from a dread of vexatious prosecutions.

It is also well known, that quacks of all denominations have long been suffered to practise with impunity. For their attempt to impose some restraint on such impostors and scourgers of the human race, the authors of the Surgeons' bill deserve the thanks of the public. *Si sic fuissent omnia!*

If

If the boasted specifics of our quacks are such as is pretended, a few thousands applied to the purchase of them would be as well expended, as the millions lavished in slaughtering the human species.

“ To save is greater far than to destroy.”

If the boasted specifics are such, it is, at least, impolitic and inhumane to lay an impost on them; and to take away one comfort from the wretched, or to add one thorn to the bed of sickness.

But while we applaud the conduct of the framers of the bill in regard to irregulars, we can find no apology for their treatment of those whom their own diploma stamps as regulars. If they are persons whose want of abilities can reflect any disgrace on the society, at the time of admission, their admission reflects a greater disgrace on those, who, from mercenary motives, admit them. In that case the public, who are the victims of the banditti let loose upon them, can never repay their obligation. If they are properly qualified at their admission to become members, nothing but self-interest and a spirit of monopoly, both of honours and emolument, both of office and practice, can prompt the Examiners, the moment after they have taken their

money, to insult them with a book of bye-laws, which informs them, that unless they confine themselves to surgery alone, and starve, the most indefatigable attention, and greatest exertion of talents, shall never raise them one step higher; but that they shall rather be *degraded* by entering into the Corporation.

Such a manœuvre can never be justified, even if it could be proved by an Examiner, that he possesses the *sensorium commune* of the whole Corporation; that the rays of all learning are concentrated in the focus of his pericranium; and that the sun of science only shines, to illumine the hemisphere of his brain.

It has been rumoured, that the opponents of the late bill opposed the erection of the Corporation into a College. If it is meant that they opposed the establishment of a College of despots, it is true; if it is meant that they opposed the establishment of a College of Surgeons, on a liberal foundation, it is false. They did not wish for Presidents, who were not the objects of their choice, and had given no proofs of deserving it: they did not wish for *Censors* who deserve *censure*: they did not wish for *self-elected Counsellors*, vested with arbitrary power, in a *multitude* of whom there could be *no safety*.

Had

Had there been the least intention of opposing the aggrandisement of the Corporation, and its erection into a College, the opposition would have commenced, when the design of soliciting new honours was first announced in the public prints, or during the progress of the bill, in its three stages in the House of Commons, or its two first stages in the House of Lords; but the members of the Corporation at large, were so far from seeking for an occasion of opposition, that while they are accused by their oppressors of unnecessary resistance, and of being too forward in their interference, I have heard them blamed by more than one distinguished member of the Legislature, for being so supine, and for suffering such an infamous bill to remain so long unopposed. Had the members of the Corporation thought it possible that such a bill could be proposed to a British Parliament, and that it could be disguised under such a specious cover, or had the members of the Legislature understood the rights of the Corporation as well as they do now, this neglect would not have happened.

The members of the Corporation, to a man, as far as I have heard their opinions, condemn the governors of the Corporation for their improvident sale, and their improvident purchase; and, had they been litigious, had they been severe to punish their faults, would have brought

an

an action against them for dilapidation. Had they been eager to resist every encroachment on their privileges, they would not have let the favourable opportunity slip, when their stewards carried a bill into Parliament without their consent, to obtain indemnification for disposing of their property without their consent, and for infringing the law of the land. For a part of the governors of a Corporation to bring in any bill, relative to the Corporation, without convening a general meeting, or even giving notice to its members of such a measure, is, as far as I know, an unparalleled proceeding, and a most indecent attempt. The authors of such a measure talk of an unbecoming opposition, with an ill grace.

Had the members of the Corporation at large, entertained an idea of resisting the proper authority of their governors, they would have begun their operations earlier, and not have waited till the framers of the bill were entrenched in their camp, and fortified by redoubts; till they had strengthened their interest by a personal canvass, and general solicitations of support. As to the title of College, it was so far, in itself, from being an objection to the bill, that it rather foothed the vanity of the members of the Corporation, lulled their suspicion, and charmed to rest the dragon that guarded the Hesperian fruit.

Well

Well might every member of the Corporation be alarmed, who was capable of comprehending the bill, and not prepared to sacrifice the rights of the Corporation, the public interest, and his own real private interest, to some apparent private interest, the hopes of patronage, the hopes of prescriptions, or the hopes of a dinner. Perhaps I ought to except from the folly of sacrificing their own real private interest, those who would wish to exclude the practitioners of midwifery and pharmacy, whether of superior merit or not, in order that they themselves may have the greater chance of succeeding to preferment. If the bill should pass, *these will have their reward.*

Well might every member of the Corporation be alarmed, when, instead of paying no taxes but with their own consent, a bill was pending in Parliament, to grant an unlimited power of taxing them, to persons in whose election they had no vote. Well might they be alarmed, when all their property was to be alienated, all their rights annihilated; and an oath to be taken, on admission into the College, which no Englishman, who deserves the name, would swallow, and no Turkish bashaw would impose.

Such a bill, so repugnant to the mild and equitable system of our laws, and so destitute of
every

every principle of justice, could never have met with supporters, if it had not been congenial to the domineering spirit of certain tyrannical chief-priests, and if the Devil had not got into *Eden*.

When the friends of the bill pretend, that the former tax on the members of the Society, under the denomination of quarterage, was deemed an object by the members of the Corporation, they are not deceived themselves, but they endeavour to deceive others, and are ashamed to confess the truth. Had that been thought worthy of objection, it would have been objected to before the bill was brought forward, and before the amount of the tax was reduced. But in the late bill, provision was made for allowing an unlimited power of taxation to persons not chosen by the Corporation; a power never granted to those who were formerly chosen by them, and in whose integrity they placed confidence.

Among the taxes imposed by their managers on the Corporation, the late alienations of their house, and part of their stock, are not the least. The stock was sold at more than twenty per cent. less than the price at which it was purchased: and as to the house, commonly called Surgeons' Hall, or the Surgeons' Theatre, in the Old Bailey, they had neglected to repair it so much, that although it appears a good edifice, and

and far from old, it was like to tumble about their ears. They are not fond of any *such music*, and do not wish to be concerned in any *such dilapidations*. They chose rather to become the managers of a *strolling company*, and bought a new Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, which has an avenue leading from Portugal Street; a spot formerly celebrated for theatrical performances. This may be called *the New Playhouse in Portugal Street*.

It has been the opinion of some people, that the farce of *The Devil on Two Sticks*, so often acted at the late Theatre in the Old Bailey, *for the benefit of the Managers*, will be laid aside; and a total change of performances take place. But unless the *auri sacra fames, et amor sceleratus habendi*, which blazed like the late comet in the Surgeons' bill, when passing the fiery ordeal, and its perihelion in the House of Lords, and with its baleful influence portended ruin, should keep up the parallel, and, like that comet, suddenly disappear, and the managers be confined to a fixed salary,—there is no reason to suppose, that so *lucrative* a performance will be laid aside.

This play, which exposes to ridicule the character of Doctor Laft, is a favourite one with the audience: for as they are apt to *take measure* of others by themselves, and as few of them under-

stand more than one art, they think it presumption in any man to pretend to understand more. In the last act, the candidate pays his fees, and is admitted; but this is rather a take-in; for he is strictly enjoined to *stick to his last*, and endeavour to earn his living by manual operation, and by working with his own tools, as other handicrafts and mechanics do. He is required to renounce the practice of physic and pharmacy, and to consider them as a mere *drug*, under pain of the displeasure of the Court of Examiners.

At the same time he is informed, for his consolation, that if he will *stick to his last*, and live in his stall, where he will be *likely to starve*, and not *tread on the heels of the Examiners*, whenever a vacancy happens in their Court, either by the death or resignation of an Examiner, they may possibly allow him to step into the *old shoes*.

As to the *old shoes of the Corporation*, it is supposed by some of the best judges, that, like the Hall where they used to tread, they are *past mending*! But to return to Doctor Last; if he continues to *practise physic*, he forfeits the favour of the Examiners; if he *sticks to his last*, he can seldom get his bread: but that is *no bread and butter of theirs*.

Many

Many a time has the Doctor been tempted to transgress, and to forfeit all pretensions to their favour; but sometimes he has concealed his transgressions. He has certainly some excuse for trying to get his bread in another way; for he declares, that while he stuck to his last, and only *practised* his own branch of business, he had *nothing to do*: but there is no excuse for his dabbling in physic, unless he understands it. In such a science, "A little learning is a dangerous thing;" and there is great reason to fear, that many such doctors have *very little learning indeed*.

One of the best entertainments ever seen at the late Theatre, is a *good dinner*. This, as well as the former, is too good a thing to be laid aside. In this entertainment, which may be considered as a kind of carousal, it is unnecessary to say there is *good acting*, when the *managers* are the *sole performers*; it is unnecessary to say there is *good music*, when the Company *pays the piper*.

In this entertainment, matters are in general so managed, that every performer plays his part well. Copious libations to good-fellowship serve as interludes; and the entertainment concludes with a sacrifice to Bacchus. Then comes an after-piece called *Examination*. This is a mere *farce*.

Happy would it be, did it not sometimes occasion
a *tragical catastrophe*!

When they excluded practitioners of pharmacy
from a seat in the Court of Examiners, they pre-
sented a comedy, called *False Delicacy*. When
they raised men, whose talents could never have
raised them, they performed the *Alchymist*, and
turned *lead* and *brass* into *silver* and *gold*.

When they carried a bill into Parliament, to
rob the Corporation of their franchises, they com-
pelled every member of the Company, who was
not prepared to sacrifice the rights of the Corpo-
ration, either at their shrine, or at the shrine of
self-interest, to act the part of *The Busy-Body*.
They have made the Legislature represent *She*
Would and *she Would not*; because they them-
selves would not represent *Things as they Are*.

Should I continue any longer to hold up to the
managers of the Company, the dramatic mirror,
and introduce low comedy and farce, in order
that they may see themselves *velut in speculo*, I
shall be accused by some readers of making
Much ado about Nothing. Such a charge I al-
ready anticipate from the prejudiced and self-in-
terested; but these remarks were not written to
please them. Such as they are, they are intended
to serve the cause of justice; and to promote the
true

true interest of the Corporation of Surgeons, and of the public.

Truth can never dread inquiry, nor shrink from discussion. Had not the supporters of the Surgeons' bill cast aside her impenetrable shield, the shafts of their adversaries would recoil. They would not *feel sore*, and writhe with pain: "*Let the gall'd jade wince.*" Had they been guided by truth, they would not have lurked in ambush; nor have shunned the strength of their opponents in the open field. Where she directs the way,

"The swords wave harmless, and the flames retire."

Happy would it be for them, if they would even now learn this lesson, and know the things that belong to their peace. Happy would it be for them, if they would at length discontinue their misrepresentations, and cast off their disguise. Exposed in all their artifices, and baffled in all their attempts; convicted of meditating despotism, but not convinced of its impracticability, they still contrive new plots, and lay new snares, to make the Corporation their prey.

With this design they circulate a report, that the bill is intended to add dignity to the Corporation,

ration, and to prevent empirics from entering into it in future, as they have hitherto done. Yet it is well known, that the degree of examination was before unlimited, and their power of admiffion discretionary; and that no augmentation of fuch powers is, or can be, conferred on them by the faid bill, if it fhould pafs into a law. It is alfo well known, that one of the moft notorious quacks in the kingdom is a member of the Company; that he was admitted by the Court of Examiners for the fake of lucre; and that no meafure has been propofed by them, in their bye-laws, or bill, either to exclude him, or to prevent every quack in the univerfe from entering into the Company, and continuing his ravages; provided he will *pay them their fees*. As quarterage is abolifhed, one temptation is removed; and fuch members may poffibly be excluded from the Company. Hitherto they have been fuffered to advertife their noftrums in every newspaper, and in every flinking corner: while they paid their quarterage, the managers of the Corporation pocketted the affront.

I have been aftonifhed at the indifference with which many members of the Company regard this bill. *Sero fapiunt Phryges*. Allured by promifes of prefent or future favour, they little fufpect the thralldom that is preparing for them.

Besides other intolerable impositions, an oath was ordained by that bill, to be taken by the members of the Corporation, by which if their tyrants commanded them to be sodomites, they must disobey them and deserve *the pillory*; or obey them, and deserve *the gallows*.

Yet there are many members of the Corporation, who call the supporting of such a system, *supporting the dignity of the Corporation*. They would support the dignity of the Corporation much more, by supporting *their own dignity*, and *the dignity of human nature*.

Is it becoming a free man, is it becoming a Briton, is it becoming a man, to fall prostrate on the ground; to humble yourselves in the dust; and to beg of your enemies to do you the honour to tread on your necks; to trample you under foot; and to triumph over you? Such abject humiliation can only proceed from an apprehension entertained by those persons, that an exalted situation would merely serve to expose their defects; and from a consciousness, that when a collegiate institution is founded, they are not qualified to become the polished pillars and Corinthian capitals of the Society, but shall still be accounted *the base*. It ought, however, to be noticed, that they who feel no emulation to excel, and to be distinguished, in the glorious career

career of science, betray a grovelling spirit, and a culpable indifference to the welfare of mankind.—*O proni in terras animi, et celestium inanes !*

Among the numerous instances of disregard shown to the rights of the Corporation by some of its members, any farther than as their own interests are concerned, the following ought not to be passed over in silence. One of them was heard to say, that he did not care two-pence for the rights of the Corporation, so long as the grievances relative to himself, as a military surgeon, were redressed. This has been called *The Age of Reason*; it ought to be called *The Age of Self-interest*. The petitioners against the late bill, who asserted the rights of military surgeons, as strenuously as they asserted their own, had a right to expect a better return.

The same gentleman makes an apology for practising pharmacy: which is, that some families would not let him attend them at all, on any other terms. The same apology may be pleaded by others. He practises pharmacy for his interest; they for theirs. Happy would it be for the public, if the same condition were more generally insisted on. I know a young man of great promise, who thinks the practice of pharmacy as honourable as any branch of the medical

ations are laid. What ideas of dignity must those men have, who can respect an institution, where the Directors are self-elected ; where taxation is without representation, and expenditure without control ?

This absolute dominion over the whole property of the Corporation, without responsibility, proposed by the modest artificers of the late bill, staggered the boldest of their champions, who was troubled with scruples of conscience, *when he despaired of carrying his point*. Not so the prime conductor of the bill, whom Lord Thurlow so emphatically described under the character of “ the importunate solicitor, who obstructed the “ avenues of the House of Lords by his daily attendance ; and nauseated their Lordships with “ his incessant applications.” He persevered ; not considering, that the members of the Legislature might not think themselves bound to support a measure, which they had pledged themselves to support, in consequence of misrepresentation.

It will not redound much to the honour of the framers of the bill, that, provided they can succeed in their undertaking, they care little by what means they may accomplish their design.

Flectere si nequeunt superos, Acheronta movebunt.

But their conduct will occasion the less surprise, when we recollect, how certain sacred characters expressed all the rage of disappointment, when the scheme was like to be defeated by a successful opposition. *Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?*

Surely what gave rise to the virulent abuse vomited forth by a certain chief priest, if it was an error, was a generous error. It was that of supposing the managers of the Surgeons' Company good economists. The author of the paper which called forth such a torrent of abuse, did not recollect when he wrote it, that the stewards of the Corporation were more fond of a good dinner than good economy; and consequently were not likely to have amassed any considerable sum for the benefit of the Corporation.

It was justly observed by the counsel for the majority of the Corporation, that if, with a revenue so far exceeding the necessary expenditure, a large sum was not saved by the managers of the affairs of the Corporation, it was the more to their shame. The character of the gentleman calumniated by that high priest, was as respectable as his own. That high priest, therefore, did not consult the dignity of Parliament, nor *support the interest of his order*, when he called loyal subjects democrats; and pronounced a paper to be
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be full of falsehoods, even if it contained one mistake.

It was a little rash in the author of that paper, to suppose that the stock of the Corporation was husbanded well ; or even that they had any stock at all remaining, when he had not been allowed access to their books, although he was a joint-proprietor of the past stock. The endeavouring to depreciate the veracity of an opponent of the bill, on account of a mistake, if it was a mistake, and branding the paper as containing nothing but falsehoods, was an illiberal attempt to bias Parliament and the public. It was unmanly in the right reverend Prelate, to give a gentleman the lie, in a place where he could not be called to account ; and where, if he called loyal subjects democrats, and told one himself, he might plead *privilege of Parliament*.

Whatever might have been the design of the framers and supporters of the late Surgeons' bill, it never could have been the design of Parliament to aggrandize the few at the expense of the many ; to erect a tyranny within the pale of Science ; to arm usurpation with new powers ; and convert an act of incorporation into an engine of despotism.

We

We know where it is written, “ Ye shall not imitate the heathen, and lord it over your brethren.” All men are brethren; the petty-tyrants of the Corporation have no right to lord it over them; and he who enables them to tyrannize, is one of their tyrants : *Qui facit per alium, facit per se.*

But, thank Heaven, we are not fallen on such evil days, but that we have still senators endowed with virtue sufficient, to teach both temporal and spiritual pride a lesson they never thought of learning—to suffer *mortification*, and bear *a cross*.

How much reason had the friends of science, the friends of justice, and the friends of the chartered privileges and inalienable rights of mankind to fear, from the black fiends that darkened their horizon, so numerous were those bad angels seen, until the sun of Thurlow arose. *Afflavit Thurlow, et dissipantur.*

With regard to the pecuniary affairs of the Corporation, though but a secondary consideration, there is something at which reason revolts, in leaving them to the management of any, but persons elected by the proprietors. But how abhorrent from vulgar understandings is a system, where expenditure is not only in the first instance subject to no control, but ultimately liable to

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It is the misfortune of the present age, that in the superior stations of the church, they cannot always see superior sanctity. Whether this arises from a defect in the objects, or in their optics, I do not presume to determine. Certain it is, that elevation to the highest stations of the church is no proof of piety. When the Devil ascended to the pinnacle of the temple, he was no ornament of the church; he was the Devil still.

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to no investigation, except by auditors elected by themselves!

It has been asserted, that there has been no misapplication of the revenues of the Company. The state of their funds, and Mr. Gunning's minute, bear ample testimony to the contrary; and prove that the grossest mismanagement, and most prodigal expenditure have prevailed. The petitioners themselves assert, that no complaint has been made against them for their conduct previous to the introduction of the bill. This assertion is likewise ill-founded. The commanders of our fleets and the Lords of the Admiralty, have complained of their granting licences to unqualified pretenders; army and navy surgeons have complained of extortion, and menaces of vexatious prosecutions; and the members of the Corporation at large have complained of oppression, unjust exclusions, and unjust prejudices excited against them. In short, they have complained, and still complain, that they know of no advantage accruing to them from belonging to the Corporation.

The petitioners for the bill, in a circular letter, express a hope, that they have executed the task of examining surgeons for the army and navy with credit to themselves and advantage to the public. This postulatum, neither their own

colleague, the author of *The Dressing for Lord Thurlow*, nor our naval ministers or commanders, nor the pillars * of Surgeons' Hall, so often loaded with their complains, will admit.

Non Di, non homines, non concessere columnæ.

It has been observed, that the library at Surgeons' Hall, which is occupied by the clerk, is destitute of books; but it ought to be recorded, for the honour of the Governors of the Corporation, that they generally take care to have *one odd volume* there. Into the cover, or rather the coffer of one of them, they used to put all the cash belonging to the Corporation; forgetting that *riches have wings*. To another they are beholden for a number of interlineations, containing *resolutions never resolved on*; but culled from loose conversations in the Court of Assistants. From those interlineations they drew sundry materials for the late bill; justly deeming them entitled to equal respect with their own resolutions, passed *a quarter of an hour before dinner*.

* Complaints of the total inability of many of the surgeons passed at the Hall for the navy service, and the orders of the Lords of the Admiralty to the Court of Examiners, in consequence of those complaints, used to be stuck up on the pillars in Surgeons' Hall.

I have

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office, when life begins to glimmer in the socket.

It has been proposed, for the Examiners and the Court of Assistants to be a distinct body: which is agreeable to reason, and to the act of Parliament; though it may not be agreeable to the wishes of the framers of a Corporation. For the able discharge of the duties of an Examiner, in which the public interest in the Corporation consists, and by which the honour of the Corporation must be supported, great abilities are requisite; for saving or spending a few pounds, shillings, and pence, mediocrity of talents may suffice.

I can see no reason why the Court of Assistants should not be allowed a compensation for their trouble, as well as the Court of Examiners: but I would abolish all dinners at the expence of the Corporation; which have too much resemblance to the feasts of parish officers, and look too much like embezzlement, to be creditable in a learned society.

Should the professional and the pecuniary departments be separated, as is here proposed, a place in the Court of Assistants, or among the Auditors, will be no object of ambition; having no tendency to raise its possessor to the rank of au

an Examiner. It will therefore be just and politic, to hold out to those who are elected to such offices, a prospect of reasonable remuneration. It is not natural, nor agreeable to experience, to expect, that any persons will be desirous of bearing the scrip, like Judas, unless they mean, like Judas, to betray.

The Auditors, or at least half of them, ought to be elected by and from the Corporation. They who would appoint a man to audit his own accounts, and to check his own expenditure, would appoint a wolf to protect the fold, and to guard against his own depredations.

Whatever opinion may be entertained of the present Examiners and Court of Assistants, it is not improbable, that at some future period the majority of them may be ignorant or corrupt; and that they may elect persons with qualifications similar to their own: thus a system of ignorance or corruption may be perpetuated. If any argument could be necessary, in addition to those before offered, to prove the absurdity of allowing the Examiners and the Court of Assistants to elect themselves, this would be sufficient.

Had some salutary regulation been provided by the former Surgeons' bill, to check a lavish
expendi-

expenditure, a Company receiving such vast sums as the Surgeons' Company, would not have been reduced to a state of bankruptcy, as that Company was a few years ago. Had some whole-some restraint been imposed, the annual tax would have been discontinued, when the revenues of the Corporation amounted to about two thousand pounds *per annum*.

It was acknowledged by the counsel for the bill, that if the payment of quarterage were any object to the members of the Corporation, and occasioned their opposition, it should be given up. This confession of its being an *unnecessary* tax after the vast expense lately incurred, proves that it was an *unjust* one before.

A noble Lord in a distinguished situation, seemed rather to countenance the idea of vesting the property of the Corporation in the petitioners for the bill; by observing, that property was in general better managed by a few than by many. But surely this is not an argument for vesting a few with the property, though it may be an argument, for vesting them with the management of the property, of the Corporation.

A right of expenditure, free from regular investigation and responsibility, denotes a proprietor, not a trustee. As joint-proprietor, no man
can

can have a right to spend more than his own share; and when he has spent that, he can have no title to the stewardship.

The late experience of the Corporation has no tendency to confirm the opinion of the noble and learned Lord. A selfish oligarchy has alienated a large portion of the property of the Corporation; and tried to usurp, and of course to alienate from the Corporation, the remainder; while the great mass of the members of the Corporation, have strained every nerve to prevent it.

In answer to several charges of misconduct in the management of the affairs of the Corporation, the same noble Lord replied, that some degree of frailty is inseparable from human nature. For this reason the opponents of the late bill contend, with all due submission, that a reciprocal check, and a mutual control, between the different branches of the Corporation, are necessary.

Had such wholesome restraints been imposed by the former Surgeons' bill, the Company would not have been reduced to a state of insolvency, as it was a few years ago, after the receipt of such considerable sums; and without any evident cause, but embezzlement and profusion.—Few societies can boast so large a revenue; few are
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burdened with less needful expense: yet none have done less to fulfil the laudable designs of their institution. From their own confession it appears, they have been prodigal in their expenditure, but sparing in promoting the improvement of the art. From the account of those who have been examined by them it appears, they have been careless in their examinations, but not careless in the receipt of custom: they have even so far forgotten the dignity of their office, as to scramble for the new guineas, before the successful candidate for admission had left the room. But perhaps the contraction of the palmaris muscle might have been involuntary: from their transport at seeing their beloved Sovereign, they might have been thrown into *sudden convulsions*, and compelled to seize *the glittering prize*.

To return to the author of *The Dressing*:—although he despairs of making any impression on the mind of Lord Thurlow, yet he hopes he shall be able to expose his instability, and crush the effects of his prejudices. But instability and prejudice are inconsistent with the greatness of understanding, and expansion of mind, which he allows his Lordship to possess; and with the declaration, that his name has hitherto stood high; and, that the opposing temper of an ex-minister, is not congenial with the

fame of a Thurlow.—He tells his Lordship, that he really thought him superior to the dirty zeal of a faction. How then could he suppose his Lordship would countenance the faction, who brought in a bill to subvert the fundamental rights of a Corporation; and to give the sanction of law to plunder and oppression? He tells Lord Thurlow, he really thought, that any undertaking, built on the well-grounded plea of public utility, would have found a warm partisan in his Lordship. This is rather strange; since he accuses his Lordship of a total inattention to all religion and morality. Such a character could never be depended on as a supporter of any *laudable* undertaking; but might well be expected, to be a warm partisan to *the Surgeons' bill*.

That bill had as many heads as the Lernæan hydra; and its breath was equally pestilential. The Herculean task of quelling the monster was destined for a Thurlow; and it required all the fire of his eloquence to subdue it.—To enumerate and describe all the baneful and obnoxious heads of this bill, would be another Herculean task. A brief account of its nature may suffice. One intention of it was to monopolize practice, another to gratify ambition; another to legalize irregular proceedings, another to indemnify dilapidation, another to fortify despotism; another

to extend encroachment, another to sanction robbery.—If any proof of its demerit were necessary, after its rejection in the House of Lords, the abjuration of it by many, who were induced by misrepresentation, and undue influence, to sign a declaration in its favour, is a sufficient testimony. It is a well known fact, that most of those who signed the declaration in its favour, rejoiced at its downfall. Many of them I have conversed with: only one of them said a single word in its defence. That gentleman acknowledged he had signed an approbation of it, from the representations of it on the part of its framers: he declared he would *stick by it*; but confessed *he had never seen it*. Some of its adherents confessed they were influenced by friendship; some by hopes, and others by fears.—Some gave the same reasons for refusing to sign the petition against the bill: others declared they were deterred by fear of expense, from engaging in a contest with the framers of the bill; who would defray their expense out of the funds of the Corporation. As a proof of the exertions made, and influence employed, in favour of the bill, one gentleman assured me, that applications for that purpose had been made to him, directly or indirectly, by every person immediately interested in its success.

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Our author avers, that to extinguish the fame of the surgeon, you must extinguish the maladies of mankind.—It is a little unfortunate, that among other arts and sciences, logic did not make a part of our author's education; and that when he made a proficiency in the botanical knowledge of Solomon, he did not also learn a little of his wisdom. He would then have known, that nothing could so much *exalt* the fame of the surgeon, instead of *extinguishing* it, as *extinguishing* the maladies of mankind.—Why is the gout called the *opprobrium medicorum*, but from the inability of physicians to cure it? And what can extinguish the fame of the surgeon? Not the extinction of maladies, but his inability to cure them.

This remark our author closes, by observing, that how far Lord Thurlow is able to extinguish either the fame of the surgeon, or the maladies of mankind, we may best learn from his own infirmities.—Here again we see the lively trait of a liberal and generous disposition; and of a noble spirit, that scorns to triumph over an enemy. Such a writer accuses Lord Thurlow of illiberality, with a good grace! But some people may be so ill-natured as to think, that even, here, they again see the old lion, at the point of death, insulted by the silly animal, who once clothed himself in his skin.

According to his usual rectitude of judgment, our author tells us, that the want of a surgical test will become a ground of monopoly. By the same logic he might prove the many to be less than the few. If our author had been of this opinion, and that he and his colleagues would have enjoyed that monopoly, he would not have thought of the similitude between surgery and Mount *Ætna*; his own mountain would not have brought forth a mouse; nor should we have had the pleasure of seeing *The Dressing prepared for Lord Thurlow*.

Our author tells Lord Thurlow, that if he supposes this defeat can hurt our profession, he errs most egregiously. This confession, in which I perfectly coincide, shows the iniquity of his cause, and the injustice of his reproaches.—This envenomed philippic, which breathes an implacable spirit of rancour and revenge, will best evince the disappointment suffered, and the mortification felt, by those who are vanquished: but whatever disappointment they suffer, and whatever mortification they feel,—to the profession at large it is *a triumph*.

*Remarks on “ An Address to Surgeons
“ throughout the British Dominions.”*

A CIRCUMSTANCE, of no importance to the reader, having retarded the publication of the preceding remarks, I am enabled to add a few observations on another pamphlet on the same subject, entitled, *A Short Address to the Professors of Surgery throughout his Majesty's Dominions, on the Bill lately brought into Parliament for erecting the Corporation of Surgeons in London into a College.*—Till this prodigy of literature appeared, we hailed *The Dressing for Lord Thurlow* as an unparalleled effort of genius;

Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes;

but when put in competition with this, it looks like dross when compared to *pure lead*.

Had the first pamphlet in defence of the Surgeons' bill met with the fate it deserved, and been burnt by the hands of the finisher of the law, we might have supposed the second a phoenix rising from its ashes.—It seems to be intended as a prop to support the dignity of surgery; but, alas! it is a broken reed!—It seems
intended

intended as an additional feather in the cap of surgery; but, alas! it is plucked from *a goose!*

Our author laments in pathetic terms, the degraded state to which the profession of surgery is reduced, by the opposition which effected the rejection of the Surgeons' bill. But it would be unfortunate for the honour of religion itself, if the lustre of its name could be tarnished by the conduct of its ministers and professors. No man, who has a just sense of the importance of surgery, as well as physic, to the happiness and welfare of mankind, will refuse his assent to the encomium of the great Roman orator: *Namque homines nunquam propius diis accedunt, quàm salutem hominibus dando.*

The author endeavours to remove an objection which has been made to the bill, on account of its being introduced to Parliament in a clandestine manner; and thinks this cannot be applied to the Surgeons' bill, which was presented for the consideration of the Lords and Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled. He says, To do a thing clandestinely implies the doing a thing secretly, lest it being publicly done should fail of the success proposed.—Had he been privy counsellor to the framers of the bill, he could not more accurately have delineated the plan of their proceedings. No notice was given
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to the Corporation of any intention to bring in such an act; nor was a proper explanation given to Parliament of the various innovations and usurpations attempted; of which its rejection, on the discovery of the fraud, is the best proof. Like the serpent in Paradise, or the Trojan horse, not its presence, but its design was clandestine. When Guy Fawkes and his friends carried combustibles into the same Parliament House, not their introduction of the combustibles, but their design was clandestine.

How exactly has the author of the *Address to Surgeons*, as well as the preparer of the *Dressing for Lord Thurlow*, when fearful of being foiled in his design, imitated the example of the great prototype of them both! He,

——— with show of zeal and love

To man, and indignation at his wrong,

New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,

Fluctuates disturb'd.

In short, he is highly incensed at the rejection of the Surgeons' bill;—*but it is all from motives of humanity!*

He next endeavours to lay a phantom, which, in all probability, never arose but in his own imagination.—He gravely tells us, that the offices of the Counsellors were not intended to be

hereditary. He also assures us, that the said Counsellors were only to hold their places during their *natural lives*. This is comfortable information; and gives us room to hope, that when a new Surgeons' bill is passed, no Examiner who leads the *unnatural life* of rapine and extortion, nor any *caput mortuum*, incapable of discharging his duty, will ever be seen in their court again.

He informs us, that the number of officers who were to transact the business of the College, was twenty-one; but the number that manages the business of the Corporation, he tells us, is twenty-four; and this alteration he approves of.—Probably he thinks three Directors may be dispensed with, as well as dinners, in a *learned society*. But the fact is, that he cannot reckon twenty-four managers of the affairs of the Company; unless he includes the two spiritual Peers, and the temporal Peer, who managed their affairs so well in the House of Lords; and went through thick and thin to serve—a friend.

Our author gives his opinion, that the public business of all corporations is best conducted where there are fewest managers. This was the opinion of Mr. Gibbs, counsel for the bill; and the friends of it seemed to agree with him; for after that day only Mr. Warren appeared, to plead their cause. This is also the opinion of
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the proprietor and manager of the borough of Old Sarum; a borough to which a pair of voters can go down cheek by jole in a single-horse chaise; a borough in which there has been no division, or contested election for many years, notwithstanding it possesses an excellent *manufactory for members of Parliament*.

Should the Master and Wardens think proper to petition for a bill constituting them a triumvirate, here is an advocate ready to defend their cause.—He maintains, that the fewer managers there are of the business of a Corporation the better, provided there are a sufficient number to form the respective courts.—On the present occasion he shows himself a great surgeon, by healing a breach before it is made, and giving a proof that he is in possession of more than a salve for every sore.—In respect to the paucity which he recommends, perhaps he thinks the fewer hands in a purse the better; at any rate, *the fewer the better cheer*. Nor can a triumvirate be said to be insufficient for forming the respective Courts. Two may compose the Court of Examiners, and three the Court of Assistants. Start not, gentle reader, nor suppose that any of them are to be split, in order to convert the three members into five. The Examiners may be *their own Assistants; as they are at present*.

The supposed reduction of number, as I before observed, our author considers as an improvement. Let the lovers of antiquity, and of antiquated notions, admire Solomon; but “a greater than Solomon is here.”—Solomon says, “In a multitude of counsellors there is safety;” our author, on the contrary, says, “The fewer counsellors the better:” and with respect to *evil counsellors*, his proposition is true.

Our author expresses a hope, that people will no longer be frightened at the names of President, Vice-Presidents, Censors, and Counsellors, as at so many bugbears; since it does not appear, that any other pecuniary emoluments were meant to be attached to those offices, than are now enjoyed by the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants. In another part of his book, he apologizes for the conduct of the Examiners and the Court of Assistants, in extending their jurisdiction to army and navy surgeons, and over a greater extent of territory. Hence it is evident, that he knew they were aiming at an increase of revenue; a prominent feature in the late bill.—*This* is the writer, who “candidly states *truth*, “and who is fearless of censure; conscious that “his intentions are irreproachable.” “Beware “of those who come to you in sheep’s cloathing; for inwardly they are ravening wolves.” He pretends to a vast deal of candour and veracity;

city; but the ardour of his virtue seems, at times, to cool; he is very fond of *lying in sheets*.

One position the author lays down, which, he says, and truly says, “ the most strenuous opposers of the bill will admit to be a truism, “ that needs no arguments to prove or illustrate. “ It is, that the Governors of the Company are “ bound to maintain, to the best of their power, “ all the rights, privileges, and immunities, “ granted to the Corporation.” It is not the maintenance, but the violation of those rights, privileges, and immunities of the Corporation, of which the opposers of the bill complain. They complain not only of *the past violation of their rights*, but of *the present attempt, to alienate all their property, and annihilate all their privileges*; of an attempt, to obtain *an unlimited power of taxation, an unlimited control, and an unconditional oath of obedience*; of an attempt, to *aggravate their burdens, to rivet their chains, and perpetuate their slavery*.

Such was the palpable design of the Surgeons’ bill. But its baneful tendency did not rest here. It vested the Court of Examiners with a power of extorting from all army and navy surgeons, under colour of law, such considerable sums as they have hitherto been in the habit of extorting, whenever they could, contrary to law. They

likewise inserted a clause, to make all surgeons between seven and ten miles tributary to them; yet this defender of their conduct modestly asserts, that it does not appear they designed to augment their income.

He says, he has been informed, that the Examiners do not get above thirty pounds *per annum*, on an average. I have known it asserted, that they get one hundred pounds, and, by another authority, that they get two hundred pounds *per annum*. This must be variable, as it depends on peace and war, and other circumstances. At any rate, the fees of the office are but a trifling object, in comparison of other advantages that accrue from the situation.

He commends the Governors of the Corporation, for purchasing beyond the limitations allowed by act of Parliament; and violating the law of the land. But if they found themselves too much restrained by that law, it was not their duty to transgress it first, and then to solicit its repeal. The Governors of the Corporation of Surgeons must indeed be in a *degraded state*, if they can derive honour from actions, that would disgrace other men!

Speaking of the right of the Master, Wardens, and Court of Assistants for the time being, to
dispose

dispose of the property of the Corporation without their consent, he commits a small mistake, by forgetting that a *steward* does not mean a *proprietor*;—a mistake which too many stewards are apt to commit.—As yet, not the exclusive property, as this author pretends, and as they themselves wish, but only the management of the property, is invested in them.

He asks, Where the propriety of disposing of the Hall could be more *impassionately* weighed and deliberated on, than in a Court of Assistants formed by men of unblemished honour and integrity? According to what he subjoins, it might be more *impassionately* considered in a Common Hall; which, he says, give rise to *trains of passion*, and *passionate declamations and reflections*.

But if he means to contend, that the question of *dispossessing* the Company of their property, and making an improvident purchase, can nowhere be so *dispassionately* considered, as in a Court of Assistants, I can inform him, that there have been men, who could not see without the warmest expressions of indignation, the shameful expenditure, and unbounded prodigality and profusion, that have always prevailed in that Court; of which Mr. Gunning's minute, lately read in the Committee of the House of Lords, and printed, gives some faint idea. So
much

much for a *Court of Assistants, formed by men of unblemished honour and integrity!!!*

Our author boasts of the extraordinary abilities of the Examiners. Whatever extraordinary abilities they may possess, certain it is, that they take care *not to let their light shine before men.* “Let us,” says he, “as long as possible avoid
“convening public meetings; and while we
“have, (as now is our boast), gentlemen of the
“first rank in their profession, and of the most
“perfect rectitude and upright intentions, for
“our governors, be satisfied, that whatever is
“done by them in a corporate capacity, is done
“for the honour of the profession at large, and
“for the general good of mankind.”—How unfortunate it is, that this doctrine of the infallibility of the Court of Assistants was not preached before the House of Lords!—But their day is past!

He gives us to understand, that the physicians have disgraced themselves by their feuds and animosities; and expresses a fear, lest surgeons should share the fate of their brethren in the *ars medendi*.—“The art of surgery,” he maintains, “is of equal importance to mankind as that of
“physic, therefore deserving equally to be ho-
“noured; but from causes that is not material
“here to insist on, is practised by few with that
“marked

“ marked respect it is entitled to : and perhaps
 “ one very essential reason of that distinguished
 “ pre-eminence the custom of the world *allow*
 “ to physicians, is the blending the business of
 “ an apothecary with the practice of surgery.”
 While surgeons can boast of such an ornament
 to their profession, let apothecaries keep a re-
 spectful distance. *Procul, o procul, este profani!*
 The physicians themselves will no longer dispute
 the palm of pre-eminence. Well may this author
 despise critics, and declare that he fears no cen-
 sure : but he would recommend *harmony* and
 unanimity with a better grace, if he did not
 show himself such an eternal enemy to *concord*.

As a proof that the seeming false concords and
 incongruities in our author's phraseology, are
 not typographical errors, but real refinements in
 speech, I shall produce another instance.—The
 increase of powers the bill craved *were*, liberty
 to purchase, &c. It may not be improper to
 give a specimen of his *concise yet elegant* diction.
 —“ Their business as apothecaries is subordi-
 “ nate to the more noble art of physic and sur-
 “ gery, therefore *highly proper* that the bye-laws
 “ of the Company should preclude those sur-
 “ geons who practise as apothecaries, however
 “ shining their surgical talents may be, from
 “ being elected as Governors of a body incor-
 “ porated for the honour and welfare of the art
 “ of

“ of surgery only.” The reason he gives is, that their business as apothecaries is subordinate to the more noble *art* of *physic* and *surgery*. But why should physic be introduced on this occasion, as a buoy to surgery, unless to exalt surgery above its fellow? Our author admits, that among those practising pharmacy, there are many persons of the most unexceptionable characters, *second to none in medical and chirurgical abilities*. To this author it appears, that surgery is degraded by being practised by such men; but to me it appears, that those men are never more degraded, than when they examine a scirrhus rectum, give glysters, operate for fistulas, dress fore legs, and do other dirty operations in surgery. If this is honour, it is honour *a posteriori*. If any thing can reconcile men of science to these mean and humiliating offices of a surgeon, or manual operator, it is only the consolation of alleviating the distress of suffering humanity.

But it is a little singular, that *surgeons* should be puffed up with this over-weening pride; who, if they possessed a particle of reflexion, and philosophic spirit, would be reminded much oftener than Philip of Macedon was, that they are but men; and that pride was not made for man.—Besides, making allowance for prejudice, what excuse can be given for their contempt of pharmacy, if it really existed? but which I doubt.

doubt. If surgeons are, as our author affirms, *gentlemen*, so are attornies, yet they follow the trade and occupation of a money-scrivener; the clergy are gentlemen, yet they follow the trade and occupation of a farmer. Even peers of the realm, and crowned heads, have not disdained the pursuits of agriculture. When Rome flourished in all her glory, the conquerors of the world retired to the plough. Those nations who have asserted the dignity of human nature most, have always conferred most honour on useful arts:

Hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini;

Hanc Remus et frater; sic fortis Etruria crevit;

Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma,

Septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces.

But still this author cannot but consider the blending the business of an apothecary with the practice of surgery, as an union degrading, in the eyes of the world, the *dignity* due to the art of surgery. He does not consider, that the science and practice of surgery are as distinct, as physic and pharmacy. When therefore the surgeon employs the means of cure, he descends, like the apothecary after visiting his patient, to execute, or superintend, the mechanical and ministerial part of his profession. Though I would not wish the world to refuse to the lords of the

the Surgeons' Company the honour due unto their names; yet I beg to remind those gentlemen, that "he who *exalteth himself* shall be "abased."

The framers of the Surgeons' bill would have consulted the dignity of their profession, and their own dignity, much more, if they had not brought before Parliament a bill, which they dared not bring before their own Corporation; and if they had not passed bye-laws, which they wished the Legislature to confirm in the lump, because they were afraid to have them scrutinized, and ashamed to introduce them into the body of the bill.—It is not a zeal for the honour of the profession, or for the honour of the House in Lincoln's Inn Fields, that hath eaten them up; but the canker of self interest.

Our author expresses a wish to aggrandize the profession, and put it on the same honourable footing it stands on in Scotland and Ireland. Here he exposes his ignorance in the highest degree; since the two branches of the profession are united in both those kingdoms; and in one of them, at least, the Examiners are elected annually, by and from the whole body.—This may serve as an appendix to the *Irish Propositions*.

Not

Not only the practice of physic and pharmacy by Examiners, but by all other Surgeons, ought to be interdicted, if it can be proved, that the sister arts can be separated with advantage; if it can be proved, that dressing a fore head adds too much dignity to an apothecary, and makes him too proud; or that a man who, by his medical as well as chirurgical skill, prevents *the necessity of operations*, is a nuisance *to the public*, as well as to the *surgeon* who merely knows how to *perform* them.

Should a renewal of the power of making bye-laws be deemed expedient, I trust some bounds will be set to it by the Legislature;—by a tribunal more liberal, more enlightened, and more disinterested, than the tribunal of the Corporation of Surgeons; and that the Supreme Power of the Realm will not suffer a subordinate Legislature, a second time, to render its salutary regulations of none effect.

This ingenious author tells us, that “ although the Governors of the Company have exceeded the bounds limited by act of Parliament, and although what exceeds the limitations there prescribed may be liable to be seized by the Crown under the Mortmain act, yet no one is injured by the purchase.” This shows that the Company’s funds are inexhausti-

ble ; as they can lose thousands, it seems, and not be the worse for it.—If he means to infer, that the officers of government will forbear to put the right of law into execution, it only tends to prove, that they are less rapacious than the officers of the Surgeons' Company, who so often go beyond the law.

Besides other artifices practised, to enhance the emoluments of the Court of Examiners, I was this day informed of one by an India Surgeon.—He tells me, that a certain Examiner, who was fond of a good fee and a good dinner, had the address to prevail on the Court of Directors of the India Company, some years ago, to pass a resolution, to compel all India surgeons to take out the half-diploma ; or, in other words, to pay above ten pounds more for their Examination, than they paid before ; or than army and navy surgeons pay now. To this imposition he was obliged to submit ; and thus a new source of wealth was opened to the Examiners of the Company of Surgeons. *This is the manner in which they examine India surgeons—gratis.*

Our author observes, that the intent of extending the jurisdiction of the Corporation three miles beyond its present bounds, would of itself scarcely have been objected to ; a proof that he
knew

knew what he asserted, concerning the non-increase of pecuniary emoluments, to be untrue.

He says, the Examiners were bound to maintain the rights and privileges of the Corporation. True: but they were not bound to invade the rights and privileges of army and navy surgeons. Former Courts of Examiners, and Courts of Assistants, were equally bound, if oaths and obligations of duty could bind them, to maintain the rights and privileges of the Corporation; but in the year 1745, a period, *like the present*, pregnant with rebellions against lawful authority, they rebelled against the members of the Corporation at large, by whom their power was delegated in trust; wrested the privilege of electing all the officers of the Corporation from their constituents; and procured an act of Parliament, to sanction the usurpation. Far be it from me, to impute the least blame to Parliament in that transaction: Parliament was deluded; and the Corporation had no *Thurlow* to plead their cause!

Our author remarks, that among the privileges granted to the Company, in common with all corporate bodies, is that of making bye-laws. This is a power which has been much abused. The Court of Examiners, not satisfied with having robbed the Corporation of the right of
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being *electors*, passed a bye-law, to render at least nine-tenths of them incapable of being *electd*. Emboldened by success, then, as well as now, they took larger and larger strides, and made greater and greater encroachments. They even attempted to supersede the laws of the land, by enacting a bye-law, to prevent any person from practising surgery without a diploma; forgetting that it was the province of their Court, not to have dominion over the whole community, but over the members of their own Corporation, and over *Surgeons' Hall*. *Illá se jacet in Aulá.*

To those who, like the authors of the ridiculous and contemptible pamphlets in defence of the Surgeons' bill, vaunt too much of the dignity of surgery, in order to disparage another branch of the medical profession, I would recommend, as a lesson for their vanity, to recollect the mortification which they must have felt, from the little respect they met with from the late King of Sweden; one of the sovereigns of Europe, who *heard of our chirurgical fame*, and sent for some English surgeons. So little did that great man regard their upstart pride, or think *the business of an apothecary subordinate to the more noble art of surgery*, as this author expresses it, that he ordered them to be flogged, for refusing *to shave his men*. If the author of the Address
was

was one of those who suffered this disgraceful punishment, it is no wonder he speaks so *feelingly* of the dignity of surgeons.

Our author observes, that in the year 1762, an act was passed, to enable such officers, mariners, and soldiers, as have been in the land or sea service, *and their wives and children*, to set up, and exercise their trades, in any part of the kingdom. It may be proper to mention, that this was an act of *the Parliament at Westminster*, not of that in *the Old Bailey*, which had promulgated the *interdiction*. It is supposed many of their *wives and children* have availed themselves of this act; as there are great numbers of *old women and children* settled in the practice of surgery, as well as physic, in every part of the British dominions.

Our author hopes surgery is, and ever will be, a profession, and not a trade. I hope the professors of it will never make a trade of it by disgraceful practices; nor make a trade of applying to Parliament for bills, to discourage and degrade their profession.

He thinks that surgeons were not meant to be comprehended in the act; otherwise, that the expressions, art, science, profession, or faculty, would have been annexed. "Then," he says,

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"the

“ the professors of surgery, and *the members of*
 “ *the commonalty of the art and science of surgeons*
 “ *of London*, who had served in his Majesty’s
 “ army or navy, would indisputably have come
 “ under the description in the act.” This is a
 mighty concession. By the same kind of logic
 he may be able to prove in time, that the Lord
 Mayor and Court of Aldermen may acquire the
 right of settling as citizens of London, and of ex-
 exercising their several arts, sciences, professions,
 faculties, and trades, by serving as officers, ma-
 riners, or soldiers, in the land or sea service, for
 a sufficient length of time.

The title of *the Commonalty of the Company*, to
 settle within *the precincts of the jurisdiction of the*
Company, is indisputable : but surely the Legis-
 lature, when it held out a bounty to encourage
 persons of all denominations to serve their coun-
 try in a military capacity, did not mean to offer
 such an indignity to officers, who are expressly
 included in the act, as to grant them the liberty
 of settling in *a trade*, and refuse them the pri-
 vilege of pursuing *a profession*, suitable to their
 rank and abilities.

The author of *The Dressing for Lord Thurlow*
 asserts, that one intention of the Surgeons’ bill
 was to grant the navy surgeons a final and
 lasting recompense, and a domestic settlement.

This

This author thinks Government had no such benevolent intention in the act above alluded to ; but meant to make a *sutor è medico* ; and to grant him no recompense, or *domestic settlement*, but in a *cobler's stall*.

Our author is so liberal as to allow, that *surgeons* who have for a certain time served their King and Country, ought to be permitted to settle where they please. But he cannot assent to granting the same liberty to *surgeon's mates*, without a scrutiny : a distinction which well deserves the attention of the Legislature.

He informs us, that the prohibitory bye-law was approved at different times by the great law-lords, among whom he mentions Lord Thurlow. That noble Lord has been convinced of his error, and retracted it. I hope the framers of the late bill will retract their errors also ; and that what reflects honour on one, who added dignity to the character of Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, will not be thought derogatory to the *dignity of a surgeon*.

One observation naturally arises out of this subject ; which is, that if a Hardwicke, a Lee, a Willes, a Thurlow, a Mansfield, and a Loughborough, have given an erroneous opinion, the business is too important, and too intricate,

tricate, to admit any justification of the conduct of those, who introduced it into Parliament in a clandestine way, disguised it by false pretences, conducted it through its different stages in a surreptitious manner, employed every species of misrepresentation, and on all occasions made use of every dirty manœuvre, in order to take the Legislature by surprise. If the greatest oracles, and brightest luminaries of this age and nation, have proved themselves on this occasion to be but fallible men, what a serious admonition is this to the members of the Legislature in general, not precipitately to form a decisive opinion upon the question !

It would be doing injustice to the learned author of the Address to Surgeons, an address designed to vindicate the honour of the profession, not to transcribe one passage more from his elaborate work. Speaking of Lord Thurlow, he says, " However that may be, his Lordship's *attempts* to place the surgeons of the navy and army under the protection of the 3d and 24th of his present Majesty, is an absolute contradiction to the *bye-laws*, which his Lordship solemnly approved in his high legal character of Lord Chancellor of England, that *ordains*, in the strongest expressions," &c. It is a little remarkable that this gentleman should inveigh so earnestly against *enmities* and *contentions*, whose

whose utter aversion to *concord* is evident in every page.

He remarks, that before physicians and surgeons became corporate bodies, no persons of either of those professions were permitted to practise, till their abilities had been examined and approved. This he confirms by citing a clause of the act of the 3d of Henry VIII. which enacts, that “no person within the city of London, nor within seven miles of the same, take upon him to exercise and occupy as a physician or surgeon, except he be first examined and approved.” Another clause in this statute enacts, “That no one shall practise out of the city and precinct of seven miles, *in any diocese of the realm*, unless approved by the Bishop of the diocese, or, in his absence, his Vicar-general, calling to their assistance such persons in the said faculties, as their discretion shall think convenient.” By whatever means the arms of the law are become shortened, and these salutary provisions, a dead letter, I trust the Legislators of the present day will venerate the wisdom of our ancestors, and like them listen to the call of humanity; and show themselves not less attentive to the happiness and welfare of the nation, than the Legislators of the age of Henry the Eighth.

Our author pathetically and justly declaims, against suffering ignorant persons to settle, and practise surgery, in any city or town in the kingdom, Oxford and Cambridge excepted. Neither he, nor any other person, can allege any reason, why Oxford or Cambridge in particular should be exempt from the general carnage; or why the meanest village in the kingdom should not be as much an object of legislative protection as the metropolis itself. That some general regulation may take place, in due season, to rescue mankind from the ravages of ignorance and empiricism, is a consummation devoutly to be wished; and that the human species may not always continue to be the only game, allowed by law to be killed, *without either qualification or licence.*

In a postscript to this curious pamphlet we are told, that “just as these sheets were going to the press, the author understands that *Reflections on the Surgeons’ bill* is about *publishing*. He thinks proper to say, that he is perfectly a stranger to the contents of the intended publication; and does not, at present, know the writer.” He reminds us by frequent examples of our unfortunate *false concord*; and that there is a time to be *active* instead of *passive*. But while I wish to do justice to his merit, I cannot bestow any great eulogium on the consistency of an
author,

author, who sets out with recommending cool reasoning, and disclaims all sarcastic reflections and spleenetic invectives; then sets every part of speech together by the ears; and fills his book with *bad language* from one end to the other. I fear this is not the way to rescue surgery from its present *degraded state*, and to restore it to its primitive dignity.

I shall close my observations on this performance, with a copy of remarks on the Surgeons' bill, published while the bill was under the consideration of Parliament. This I subjoin as a supplement to the foregoing reflections:

Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum.

Remarks on the Bill for erecting the Corporation of Surgeons of London into a College, &c.

THERE is, at this time, pending in Parliament, an act, in which the Company of Surgeons are held out as the petitioners to render their Corporation collegiate, whilst not more than twenty-one of five hundred existing members of that Corporation have been consulted on its expediency or contents, and eleven only have petitioned for it. It is intended, by this act, to
confirm

confirm to these twenty-one persons, who are to be called Counsellors, (nineteen of whom are, in said act, already nominated,) a dominion for life over all the surgeons in London, and its vicinity, for ten miles round, together with the exclusive power of electing to vacancies in their own body.

The act therefore delegates, to these twenty-one Counsellors, the uncontrolled management and expenditure of the revenues of this extensive and increasing Corporation. But there is not a member upon their lists, who has not already, equally with themselves, contributed to augment those revenues; nor can any man, in future, be admitted a member among them, but he must likewise contribute a prompt, arbitrary fine, and an annual subscription, to support the finances of this College*. Every member must, like themselves, have undergone the established examination, touching his professional fitness. He becomes, from the moment he is admitted, as unequivocally entitled, as themselves, to all the privileges of his profession; but, from the operation of the bill in question, he must owe, to the partial favour alone of these self-nominated Counsellors, the attainment of that rank and in-

* This point has been given up for the present; in consequence of the opposition to the bill.

fluence, to which long experience and approved abilities should give the only claim.

These twenty-one Counsellors petition, moreover, to secure to themselves, and their successors, (to be elected by their own body,) the privilege of making and altering, or abrogating, at pleasure, all collegiate ordinances, for the professional government and direction of the body at large, who must be, therefore, bound to the strict observance of such ordinances, without the privilege of combating, or in any way resisting them, however partial, unjust, or oppressive; and, except from their penal operation, they have not even the means of becoming acquainted with their origin, nature, or extent.

Is it probable that twenty-one persons, legally invested with such arbitrary power, will consult the public welfare, in opposition to the strong interests arising from consanguinity and patronage? Is it not more probable that the sons or relatives of these Counsellors, or their apprentices, from whom they may receive premiums proportionably high, will be preferred,—to the neglect of older and wiser men,—to the neglect of men of eminent literary character,—or of men who may probably have sustained all the ravages of climate, and all the dangers of war, in the service of their country, as army or navy surgeons? Can it

it be just to establish an hereditary or adoptive succession, in a College, which should discountenance and oppose every principle restrictive of the liberal advancement of an art, the most instrumental to the security and enjoyment of life?

Had these petitioners directed their attention to the learned Colleges in any part of Europe, they could scarcely have found any one possessed of the arbitrary power, which they are endeavouring to obtain; whilst from every quarter they might have drawn examples of far more liberal conduct. Might they not have found examples in the election of the councils of the Royal and Antiquary Societies of this kingdom, than which no incorporations can be conducted with greater dignity, nor with more general satisfaction?

If, indeed, it were practicable for a few men to monopolize professional talents, learning, industry, and experience, it might, perhaps, be wise to establish a College, from which should be diffused, for the general benefit of mankind, the result of their deliberations. But the men, who are now petitioning for collegiate privileges, have given to the world no proofs that they have cultivated professional science with greater industry or success, than many others of the Corporation,

ration, who are totally excluded from this intended College. That the art of surgery has been much improved, during the last thirty years, cannot be disputed ; the improvements, however, have not originated in them particularly, but have, in many instances, been opposed and interrupted by men invested with powers similar to those, which they now petition for ; and, we doubt not but it must be evident, that the diminishing the chances of professional promotion, at the very period of human history, when all the sources of science are multiplied and expanded, is peculiarly illiberal, and injurious to mankind. Such a plan can only arise in minds too narrow to consult the public good, when placed in opposition to the love of power or pecuniary emolument. We have the fullest confidence, therefore, that an attempt so derogatory to justice, merit, and science at large, as that now introduced by the bill in question, will never be countenanced.

*Remarks on Mr. CHEVALIER'S Defence of
the Surgeons' Bill.*

HAVING delayed the publication of the foregoing strictures, for reasons not necessary to be specified here, I have had an opportunity of perusing a third defence of the Surgeons' bill, written by Mr. Chevalier.

Mr. C. tells his readers, that “ the bill which
“ was brought into Parliament during the last
“ session, for erecting the Corporation of Sur-
“ geons of London into a College, has been so
“ much misrepresented by its opponents, that it
“ is necessary to state to the public the occasion
“ of its introduction, and the purposes it was in-
“ tended to answer.”

Whether Mr. C. is able to prove his assertion, we shall see hereafter : but it is a charge which has been brought with too much reason, and established too clearly, against the friends and adherents of the late bill ; a charge which comes with an ill grace from Mr. Chevalier, the first sentence of whose book contains a gross misrepresentation.

In an advertisement prefixed to the work he informs us, that he attended the meeting at the Crown and Anchor, on the 8th of May, to consider of the propriety of opposing the Surgeons' bill: but being soon convinced, that the objections made against it were of no force, he thought it his duty at the next meeting, two days after, to state his view of the question. He adds, that some gentlemen present agreed with him; but a greater number did not. This determined him to inquire more fully into the subject; and to publish the result of his inquiries; in order to remove the mistakes which had arisen concerning the bill.

During the whole progress of the opposition to the bill, Mr. C. acted a conspicuous part. After speaking against the bill, subscribing towards the expense of opposing it, assisting in drawing up, and signing the petition against it, he suddenly veered about, and signed the counter-declaration. From that time he daily attended the progress of the bill, in the House of Lords; and was one of its most zealous partisans. Sometimes he acted as the *locum-tenens* of the clerk's clerk, and kept the purple bag. At other times he stood by the principal framer of the bill, like a *receiver*, placed there to catch whatever dropt from him; and it must be confessed, he has caught a

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good

good deal of his *spirit*;—a *spirit* which stands in need of RECTIFICATION.

Whether his conversion was real or pretended, is not material to the public: I shall therefore consider what he has advanced in support of the bill; only premising, that he is guilty of misrepresentation, when he pretends, that he soon perceived the objections made against the bill were of no force. It must be rather a new occurrence in the annals of Parliament, for a man to beseech the Legislature not to listen to his own petition, and to blow hot and cold at the same time, with the same mouth.

Mr. C. is an apothecary, as well as a surgeon, and as the rights of surgeons practising pharmacy have been invaded by the Court of Assistants, he may be supposed, in the part which he has taken, to have sacrificed his own interest. But before that point can be determined, it is necessary to ascertain, what are his hopes as an apothecary, and what his pretensions as a surgeon. By flattering those, who could recommend or injure him as an apothecary, he may possibly promote his own private advantage; and as all surgeons prescribe, his book may save him the trouble and expense of writing in his window, *Prescriptions faithfully prepared here.*

Many

Many members of the Corporation confess, that they had but little chance of rising in surgery; and that they signed the counter-declaration to oblige Mr. — or Mr. —, with whom their business is much connected: thus acknowledging themselves to be mean sycophants and dependants. Were strict inquiry made, it is probable it might appear evident, that a certain gentleman, who would fain be thought disinterested, balanced in his own mind his pharmaceutical against his chirurgical hopes, (*fatis contraria fata rependens*), and that his chirurgical hopes kicked the beam. But perhaps it may be deemed illiberal, to suppose he would sacrifice to his new divinities *what cost him nothing*.

Mr. C. hazards a number of bold assertions, and displays a considerable degree of quixotism, in defence of the Surgeons' bill. He seems apprehensive lest it should be imagined, that the age of chivalry is gone, and the glory of the Surgeons' Company extinguished for ever.

From his versatility he bears much less resemblance to the renowned Chevalier of Spain, than to his antagonist the windmill. If his defence is not the most able, I hope it will prove a cheap one. Yet notwithstanding his fulsome adulation, if the friends of the bill know their own

own interest, they will not thank the authors of such vindications, but exclaim :

Their gifts are more destructive than their swords.

The object of this book is, to recommend the bill to the Legislature and to the public. With this intention he examines into the antiquity of the establishment of surgery, in this and other countries, and proves that in general it has not been respected as it ought to be; having been practised by the servants of water-doctors, while it was thought unworthy to be followed by the masters of that honourable occupation: and having been associated in corporations with the meanest of trades.

As a proof of the high consideration in which the profession was held, he gives us to understand, that when the monks in France were forbidden to leave their cloisters, and visit patients, they turned water-doctors, and sent their servants abroad to shave, and do other manual operations. Hence it is no wonder he allows surgery a superiority over pharmacy; and thinks himself, and other practitioners of pharmacy, unworthy to enter the *sanctum sanctorum* in a Surgeons' College. Apothecaries' Hall ought to be the highest pinnacle of his ambition :

—*Illâ se jactet in aulâ.*

Having

Having deduced the profession from a most respectable source, and having moreover proved, that the practitioners of that art were not admitted to academical honours, nor even thought worthy of being members of the university of Paris, he proves that in England it was disgraced still more, by an act of parliament which ordained, that surgeons should frequently assemble with all the motley crew of the Barber-Surgeons' Company, consisting of barbers, bagnio-keepers, drapers, carpenters,

Black spirits and white,
Blue spirits and grey,

“for the purpose of improving the art, both in speculation, and practice.”

Having thus asserted the illustrious descent of the Corporation, he expresses his astonishment, that Lord Thurlow and others should speak of its origin in disrespectful terms. With regard to the science itself, its honours are eternal as the heavens; and can never be diminished, or augmented by the breath of mortal fame: but it ill becomes a Corporation to boast of its dignity, when it is but just *emerging from barberism.*

After bringing forward sufficient evidence to prove, that the profession has too often been dishonoured and disgraced, Mr. C. produces a few instances

instances of its having been sometimes properly respected. But of what advantage are such arguments ?

*Non tali auxilio, neque defensoribus istis,
Tempus eget.*

A rose is not the less sweet, and ought not to be the less esteemed, because it sprung from a dunghill : and, I trust, our senators are so far from wanting examples, to urge them to pay due honours to that divine art, that they would glory in being the first, who placed it on its proper level, and laid the foundations of its greatness.

The advocates for the Surgeons' bill are offended with those, who allude to the humble origin of the Corporation. It was done with a view to check pride, and mortify vanity. One of the apologists for that bill compares the profession to the Nile ; which, from small beginnings, at length swells into a mighty river. The parallel is, indeed, too exact. The simile runs upon all-fours. Surgery, according to its present establishment in this country, not only resembles the Nile in the smallness of its source, but in producing many a half-formed animal, and many a brainless monster. It flows in a variety of streams ; and as it flows, too oft, alas !
it

it spreads a pestilence, dispenses death, and fattens the land.

According to Bruce, the Nile rises in Abyffinia ; according to the author of the *Dressing for Lord Thurlow*, many a furgeon, approved by the Court of Examiners, appears to derive his learning from the same source.

Mr. C. seems to think, that shaving the head was formerly considered as a *capital operation* ; and barbers and furgeons as *chips of the same block*. Having thus, as a furgeon, jealous of the honour of his profession, asserted the dignity of its origin, without the least inconsistency he tries to depreciate the other branches of the medical art. He talks of the *inferior branches* of practice ; and takes care to let us know, that furgery was established in England by authority, fifty-nine years before phyfic.

Nevertheless, he does not absolutely decide, whether phyfic or furgery deserves the preference ; but by affirming that many of the discoveries and improvements in phyfic have been owing to mere accident, while most of the improvements in furgery have originated in reasoning *à priori*, and by quoting Celsus, to prove that the effects of furgery are more evident than those of any other branch of the healing art, he plainly infi-

nuates, that surgery is entitled to superior honours. For this the College of Physicians will thank him.

But there is reason to believe, that he makes use of the expression inferior branches of practice, in conformity with his grand design; in compliment to the mere surgeon, and in support of the Surgeons' bill. By that expression therefore we must understand pharmacy; and not only pharmacy, but midwifery also. For this the whole human race, and especially the fair sex, will thank him.

Mr. C. mentions, among other reasons for applying to Parliament for a new act, that the Hall occupied by the Company was in want of repair; and that if the Company repaired it, advantage would be taken of it at the expiration of the lease, which has *only* fifty-five years to run. This observation deserves no answer. If Mr. C. reasoned no better at the Crown and Anchor, it is no wonder he made so few converts.

Mr. C. confesses, that in addition to 5,500*l.* the sum given for the new house, an expense of 800*l.* will be incurred by the alterations necessary for a library, theatre, and dissecting-room. This is a very *convenient* way to lighten a purse that is too heavy.

After

After stating the design of the bill, Mr. C. expresses his opinion that the Legislature which refused to sanction it before, will not refuse to sanction it at their next meeting. He has heard, we presume, that senators are fallible men like himself; and therefore concludes, that, like himself, they cannot continue of the same mind on *two successive meetings*.

Mr. C. as well as others, had a *complaint* against the bill; but *his complaint* was of the ephemeral kind. It is thought by some, that as the *quaking-fit* was so short and so violent, the disorder was an ague; and that it was cured by the usual specific; as they saw a little of the *Jesuits' Tincture* about his lips.

Mr. C. informs us, that in the proposed bill, the names of the officers of the Company were to be changed; but their power was to remain exactly the same. This is an unguarded assertion, in a person who attended the progress of the bill in Parliament, and must know, that besides other accessions of power, their power of levying contributions was to be extended from seven to ten miles, and over all army and navy surgeons.

He then tells us, it was proposed to substitute in its stead, a speculative and untried scheme;

forgetting, that the bill was planned in the very spirit of innovation; and that its opponents were urged to a resistance of it by a sense of past injuries, and a dread of their accumulation, if the bill should pass into a law.

He next endeavours to show the propriety of *our* enjoying the honour that has been solicited. Gentlemen who practise pharmacy, must have a strange idea of honour, who wish to aggrandize those who, from illiberal motives, exclude them from a participation of that honour. They must have a strange idea of honour, who wish to swell the pride and power of men, who have long trampled them under foot. They must have a strange idea of honour, who wish to enjoy the *honour* of being treated with *contempt*. By feeling so much interest in honours, not likely to fall to *his* share, Mr. C. reminds us of an ass carrying a chimney-sweeper on a May-day; who thinks himself honoured by the bastinado, because his master is bedaubed with Dutch metal; and goes jogging on through the mire, exulting in his happy lot, and frisking his tail in triumph.

In order to show the propriety of *our* enjoying the aforesaid honour, Mr. C. proposes to enter a little into the history of the Company; and briefly to consider what surgery is, and what progress

gress it has made. This he thinks the more necessary, on account of the remarks made by Lord Thurlow, in the last session of Parliament.

He justly observes, that “ it is the object of a
 “ science, and not the state of it, from which
 “ we are to estimate its importance. The latter
 “ depends on a variety of circumstances, which
 “ are subject to great uncertainty. The spirit of
 “ the times, and the patronage of the public,
 “ must concur with the genius and industry of
 “ individuals, or few advances can be made in
 “ a profession like surgery; which, however
 “ contemptible it may appear to those who do
 “ not understand it, opens on every path of
 “ human inquiry; and calls for the close and
 “ persevering reflection of a vigorous and com-
 “ prehensive mind.”

He remarks, that both surgery and physic were formerly practised in France by priests: and that when the priests were forbidden to leave their convents and visit patients, they were consulted at home. He tells us, that the servants or friends of the sick used to carry their urine and other excrements to them, with as good an account as they could give of the indisposition. We cannot read this without recollecting, what excrements were carried before our own divines, during the last session of Parliament, in the form
 of

of a Surgeons' bill; and what erroneous and contradictory accounts were given by the bearers, concerning those who had voided them: some thinking them dormant, others on the verge of dissolution, others defunct. The public in general were of opinion, that the business was brought forward in a most indecent manner.

He tells us, that the clergy occasionally inter-meddled with the practice of surgery, till at length, by two decrees of the Popes, it was formally separated from physic; the priests were forbidden to practise it; and the University of Paris refused to admit any student into the faculty of medicine, who did not abjure it. Thus it appears, that the separation of those two arts, between which there is such a natural affinity, proceeded from Popish ignorance and superstition.

Mr. C. informs us, that a better and more just opinion of surgeons, seems to have been entertained at Vienna than at Paris; and as a proof of it, cites a clause from the statute of the Emperor Frederick II. the founder of the academy at Vienna, by which the school of Salernum obtained the power of granting degrees in medicine, about the middle of the thirteenth century. It is as follows: *Salubri etiam constitutione sancimus, ut nullus chirurgicus ad practicam admittatur, nisi*
testimo-

testimoniales literas afferat magistrorum in medicinali facultate legentium, quod per annum saltem in ea parte medicinæ studuerit, quæ chirurgiæ instruit facultatem; et præsertim anatomiam humanorum corporum in scholis didicerit, et sit in ea parte medicinæ perfectus, sine qua nec incisiones salubriter fieri poterunt, nec fracta curari. Bulæi Hist. Univ. Par. tom. iii. p. 158.

The world is obliged to Mr. C. for this quotation. It deserves to be interwoven with the body of his work; and not cast down into the notes, like refuse matter. It is of more value than all the bye-laws ever passed at Surgeons' Hall. Its language is such, as would not disgrace the Augustan age. Its humane intention, and enlightened policy, would have done honour to Solon or Lycurgus. Yet this is the production of the thirteenth century. Let the eighteenth century, which calls the thirteenth a barbarous age; the eighteenth century, which leaves mankind miserable victims to every despicable pretender, read this—and blush!

By this wise and salutary regulation it was ordained, that no person should be admitted to the practice of surgery, who did not bring testimonials from the professors, of his having studied that branch of the healing art, and especially anatomy, for one year at least. Modern times
are

are more polite, and require no testimonials. There are many men admitted at Surgeons' Hall, who could not produce any testimonial of their study: they could as soon produce a receipt for the *philosopher's stone*. Ask them what is the practice of hospitals, and you might as well ask them about the practice of *terra incognita*. Ask them, why a process of the scapula is called acromion? "An' they tell you that, they'll ne'er look you in the face again. It would be Greek to them."

If it is asked, why members are admitted into the Corporation with such facility? the following anecdote may serve as an answer. A person was examined for the office of surgeon's-mate, and rejected. Soon after he offered himself as candidate for the diploma, and was accepted. The first time he went with one guinea in hand; the last with many. When he angled for a mateship, his hook was almost bare; when he angled for the diploma, it was *well-baited*.

Pursuing the thread of his history of surgery, Mr. C. acquaints us, "that in the year 1311, an
 " edict was published in France, obliging all
 " surgeons to pass examinations, and to punish
 " such as practised without a licence. A college
 " was established; and Charles V. while regent,
 " enrolled his name among the list of its mem-
 " bers;

“ bers; as did his fucceffor, Louis XIII. in
 “ 1615, the year after he was declared of age by
 “ the regent.” Thus it appears, that the fcience
 has heretofore been thought worthy, as I trust it
 ever will, of every honour which kings them-
 felves can beflow.

In the ninth year of the reign of Henry the Fifth, an act of Parliament paffed in England, to punifh thofe who practifed furgery without being approved by mafters of the art. But Mr. C. obferves, that the furgeons of London did not apply for a patent of incorporation till the reign of Edward the Fourth.

He ftates, that while beards were worn, fhaving was an operation very rarely performed, and was actually confidered as the bufinefs of a furgeon; being feldom needed, except in cafes of fome accident which made it neceffary to remove the hair from the injured part; or of thofe difeafes in which confiderable relief was expected from fhaving the head, and making certain applications immediately to it. There is reafon to believe, that prior to the reception of the faculty of medicine into the Univerfity of Paris, this was frequently performed by the clergy; afterwards by furgeons; and it was fhortly confined to the lower clafs of them.

The barbers of London, Mr. C. remarks, were incorporated as surgeons, by Edward IV. in 1461; and *as surgeons*, and in no other capacity, they obtained their charter from that prince. This was the first incorporation ever established in Great Britain, for the regulation of any branch of the medical profession: *being erected fifty-nine years before the College of Physicians*. By this charter, power was given to the governors, to punish unlicensed practitioners by fines, forfeitures, and imprisonments.

Mr. C. asserts, that, “besides other causes
 “why surgery was of less importance than now,
 “lawless love had not engendered that fatal
 “poison, which has since overspread so many
 “thousands of her votaries with rottenness and
 “misery.” That lawless love engendered this
 poison, is, indeed, a vulgar notion; but we
 could not have expected it to be adopted by any
 professional man of the present day; especially
 by a member of the Corporation of Surgeons of
 London,—by the champion of the Court of
 Examiners,—by one who thinks the Corporation
 worthy of collegiate honours. The Court of
 Examiners have been censured for excluding
 apothecaries from their Court: I hope Mr. C.
 who is an apothecary, will be a little more cau-
 tious, lest he should furnish them with a justifi-
 cation

cation for excluding apothecaries not only from the Court, but also from the Corporation.

If lawless love could engender that poison, the natives of the islands in the South Sea would have engendered it by their promiscuous amours; and not have been beholden to Europeans for that favour. Let me advise Mr. Chevalier, before he goes forth again, as the knight-errant of the petty-tyrants of a Corporation, as the dictator of the senate, and as the oracle of wisdom, to learn a little of the rudiments of his own profession :

Hæ tibi erunt artes.

Mr. C. informs us, that the barbers and surgeons of Edinburgh were incorporated in 1505. The act of Parliament to prevent physicians or surgeons from practising in England, without an examination and licence, was enacted in 1512. We have the authority of Sir Thomas More, Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, for affirming, that at this period, his infernal Majesty had plenty of barber-surgeons in his dominions. This information may be useful to Mr. C. against he publishes another edition of his works; in order to make his history of surgery complete.

He informs us, that “ the Royal Academy of
“ Surgery at Paris was instituted by Louis XV.

“ in 1731. The number of surgeons in the
 “ Company of Barber-Surgeons of London, at
 “ the time of their separation, was 114.” It is
 difficult to discover the utility of the different
 publications in defence of the Surgeons’ bill,
 unless it be, the humbling the pride of the mem-
 bers of the Corporation, by reminding them of
disgraceful connexions.

After paying several handsome and well-me-
 rited encomiums to some of those surgeons, who
 by their joint labours have advanced the science
 to its present state in this kingdom, Mr. C. ex-
 claims, “ Who would have thought that Lon-
 “ don, the centre of this favoured kingdom,
 “ where surgery has been cultivated with such
 “ eminent advantage to mankind, should have
 “ been marked out as the precise spot, where
 “ its professors must be held up to mockery and
 “ derision ?”

While [I cheerfully join with Mr. C. in vin-
 dicating the honour of surgery, and in bestowing
 a just tribute of applause on a Cheselden, a Sharp,
 a Pott, a Hawkins, a Bromfield, and those
 twin-stars, the Hunters, I by no means agree
 with him, that the Legislature would have been
 justified in sanctioning the late Surgeons’ bill,
 even if those bright luminaries had arisen again
 in one constellation, to solicit such a measure. I
 trust

trust its narrow, selfish, and illiberal policy, its tyrannical spirit, and its pernicious tendency, have been sufficiently exposed. Of this its friends seem conscious; or they would not make the press groan, for a third time, with unanswered remarks; nor rake into the ashes of the illustrious dead; nor introduce their names, to support a drooping cause.

Mr. C. and the other friends of the bill, ought to recollect, that the opposition to that bill arose, not from an objection to the Society's enjoying collegiate honours, but to a self-elected junto's exercising a despotic power. Mr. C. however endeavours to justify the whole bill; and seems to think that the members at large ought to be bound down with adamant chains to perpetual slavery. His sentiments are congenial with those of the planters of Saint Domingo; who, when their agent in London had asserted, that "the public mind of the nation seems inclined to acknowledge, that the continuation of slavery is odious and useless," published an advertisement in the London papers, to the following effect—"The inhabitants, justly apprehending, that a longer silence on their part respecting such *dangerous doctrines*, might be construed into an implicit avowal of them, and alarmed at the impressions which their not noticing them might give rise to, in consequence

“ quence of the confidence of which Mr. Ma-
 “ louet avails himself, are now eager to step for-
 “ ward, to disavow them, and in order more
 “ formally to do so,” &c. Should the Surgeons’
 bill again experience the same fate, as I trust it
 will, it may be sent to Saint Domingo. It is an
 exotic, and not likely to flourish in our soil.

Mr. C. tells us, that the societies of surgeons
 in Edinburgh and Dublin have been incorporated
 as colleges, without any hesitation. What does
 this prove? That our Legislators were ready to
 confer a just rank on the liberal professors of the
 science; while they rejected with indignation,
 the self-interested proposals of an odious and un-
 just usurpation and monopoly.

Mr. C. tells us, that it is impossible to main-
 tain the vigour and perfection of any science,
 without holding out encouragements for men of
 talents and property to devote themselves to it;
 and that these encouragements are rank and for-
 tune; Mr. C. is right in stating, that a man who
 devotes himself to surgery, should have good pro-
 perty as well as talents. But it will be very
 little consolation to such a man to know, that at
 present no encouragements are held out to him
 in this kingdom, to devote his talents to that sci-
 ence. Whatever beneficent designs the Legisla-
 ture has formerly entertained, whatever schemes
 it

it has planned for the promotion of the art, its favour has been diverted from its proper channel by the domineering few, and absorbed in their own vortex.

It is well known, that no incitements are held forth, no rewards are offered, no remuneration is proposed, for men of talents and fortune, who exert those talents, and expend that fortune, in surgical inquiries. After wasting the flower of his youth, and a considerable part of his fortune, in the acquisition of useful science, after a classical education, and a patient and laborious research after professional knowledge, in books, in lectures, in anatomical pursuits, in the melancholy abodes of the sick and lame, the dying and the dead,—after the dangerous and loathsome task of dissecting putrid and infectious bodies,—he is not entitled to any prompt and adequate recompence for his attendance and skill, like the physician; but, when the cure is performed, thinks himself fortunate if he is not totally defrauded. A man of small fortune who has devoted himself to this profession, may thank his stars, if, after following the practice twenty years, he does not sit down poorer than he was when he begun. How unlike is this to the fate of those, who devote their talents to other learned professions !

But

But what marks out the surgeon as destined to the most severe lot, and as the victim of peculiar vengeance, is, that he must either submit to consume, not only his time, his labour, and perhaps his health, but also his fortune, in the service of the public, with a very precarious prospect of a just return. Rank and fortune, and the patronage of the public, are allowed by Mr. C. to be necessary encouragements towards maintaining the vigour and perfection of the science. If a young surgeon, of moderate fortune and connexions, refrains from practising pharmacy, he must starve: if he practise pharmacy, he will forfeit all chance of preferment in the Corporation, and be degraded, for supporting himself in an honourable way, and rendering himself useful. Thus Mr. C. pleads for the necessity of the usual encouragements, rank and fortune, for the self-elected few; but denies those advantages to the members of the Corporation at large. They are doomed to spend their fortune, or forfeit their rank, by a most iniquitous and impolitic bye-law; which operates like a mildew; checking the cultivation of their talents, blighting the fruits of their genius, disappointing all their expectations, and blasting all their hopes.

In answer to these observations and arguments, Mr. C. may produce a few instances of persons

educated in pharmacy, who have become eminent as surgeons. Let him look a little deeper than the surface, and he will see, that they owe their rise to a surgeoncy *purchased* in the *Guards*, or in an *hospital*, to an accession of fortune, or to patronage :

Haud facile emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi.

Mr. C. tells us, that surgery and physic were always *blended*, in the practice of those famous men of old, several of whom were deified and adored by a people, ignorant, it is true, of religion, *but very well acquainted with the policy of nations* : yet, with an unaccountable inconsistency he gives his opinion, that however necessary it may be, that some surgeons in the military and naval departments, and in other situations, should act in a twofold capacity, this is a necessity arising from contingent circumstances, and not at all from the nature of the profession. When we read such contradictory sentiments, we cannot help lamenting, that any circumstances should render it necessary for *Mr. Chevalier* to act in a twofold capacity. It is rather unfortunate, when a person reduces us to such a dilemma, that we cannot acquit him of duplicity, without bringing an impeachment against his understanding.

After observing, that those who practised physic and surgery in conjunction, were deified and adored by a people well acquainted with the policy of nations, and after justly ridiculing the doctrine maintained in the time of Queen Elizabeth, that if a man had but a boil on his nose, he must have a surgeon to apply a plaster, a physician to order him a purge, and an apothecary to put it up; greatly TO THE RELIEF OF HIS POCKET, and the good order of the profession, he contends, that “the two branches ought to be
 “cultivated distinctly in a large metropolis;
 “where the professors of each can be fully employed, and sufficiently rewarded.” This doctrine merits the grateful acknowledgments of every inhabitant of the metropolis; as it will tend greatly to *the relief of his pocket, and the good order of the profession.*

Thus Mr. C. recommends the separation of the two branches in his book, but combines them in his practice. He is so great an advocate for severing the kindred arts, and knows so much of the persons to whom we are indebted for improvements in surgery as to assert, that the prosperity and improvement of the art depend immediately on those who cultivate it separately, and alone. Thus it appears, that little improvement in the art is to be expected from Mr. Chevalier.

But

But the medical world in general have not so soon forgotten the names of William Hunter, Hewson, Monro, Cruikshank, White, Kirkland, Gooch, Wilmer, and Bell. These, and many others, who have united different branches of the profession, have, by their joint labours, by their extensive erudition, by their medical as well as surgical knowledge, improved the art at least as much as the present Court of Examiners, whom Mr. C. is inclined to deify and adore, as the *alpha* and *omega* of the profession.

The medical world in general have not forgotten the name of Allanson; to whom surgery is much more indebted for its improvement and prosperity, than to the whole Court of Examiners put together. To him we are indebted for the practice of healing by the first intention, in capital operations. The value of this improvement, on account of the pain it prevents, and the lives it saves, is inestimable. The flap-operation for the leg, when performed after his manner, preserves the use of the knee, and such ease in walking, that some who have undergone that operation, declare, that when they walk, they forget they have lost their leg.

This operation, so important and so beneficial, the gentlemen on whom alone Mr. C. supposes the improvement and prosperity of the art to de-

pend, were the last to adopt. One of them attempted it in vain; and was obliged to finish the bungling job by a second operation; and to sacrifice the flap by the circular incision. From that time he decried the operation; and, being a teacher of surgery, his opinion had extensive influence. Another of the surgeons, on whom, according to Mr. C. the improvement and prosperity of the art depend, when, conversing on the subject, he betrayed ignorance of this improvement, was told he might see it described in Allanson's book on Amputation: to which he replied, with a degree of self-sufficiency peculiarly his own, "I never read such books as those."

Mr. C. declares a knowledge of the theory of medicine to be the true foundation of good surgical practice: yet with an inconsistency worthy of himself, affirms that the improvement and prosperity of the art depend immediately on those who cultivate it separately and alone. Possibly Mr. C. may forget, that the discoveries of anatomists, and physicians, the improvements in the theory and practice of physic, the discovery of the lymphatics, and of the circulation, which were not made by persons who confined themselves to the practice of surgery, have had *some small share* in improving that art. Mr. C. thinks most of the improvements in surgery have arisen from

from reasoning *à priori*. Perhaps he thinks no man is capable of reasoning *à priori* but a mechanic.

Speaking of the state of surgery in this kingdom, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Mr. C. tells us, that the surgeons, not only then, but for a long time after, were inattentive to that true foundation of good surgical practice, a knowledge of the theory of medicine; and this neglect led them to admit several, perhaps many, (*risum teneatis*), into their number, who were extremely ignorant in that respect, and who were merely acquainted with the general anatomy of the body, and the mechanical performance of such operations as were then in use. Alas! we have known too many admitted of late years, who knew no more of anatomy than what they had learned from books, nor of the theory of medicine than what they had learned by weighing jalap, and pounding horse-balls:—men who had neither attended hospitals or lectures, nor had a classical education, nor been under the tuition of any surgeon, or even apothecary. To such men we have known the lives of our brave seamen entrusted. To such men, as well as to men and women midwives, who in general are not examined, horrid to relate! have we known too many of the female sex, and their helpless and innocent offspring, fall victims. This calls aloud for redress.

It

It is but justice to remind our Legislators, that there is no law now in force to prevent men or women from practising midwifery without an examination. The College of Physicians have, indeed, instituted a new order of practitioners, called licentiates in midwifery. Into this order they admit such as voluntarily offer themselves, provided they pass their examination. This ceremony is rather too ridiculous to be passed over without some animadversion. Those who profess the practice, are examined by those who do not.

This order of merit is said to have been planned out of compliment to a very celebrated professor of the obstetrical art, by a physician equally celebrated: and perhaps it is the only absurd thing ever proposed by him.—What would our English Aristophanes have said, if he had seen Doctor Last turned Examiner? *Ne futor ultra crepidam.*

To heighten this farce, they refuse to examine those who practise pharmacy, and to invest them with this dignity. It is their place to show, that this distinction is reconcilable to a regard for the public welfare; which ought to supersede all other considerations; and that it is not the offspring of empty pride. Possibly they were willing to keep the Court of Examiners of the Corporation

tion of Surgeons in countenance. “ The Lord
 “ created medicines out of the earth ; wherefore
 “ a wise man will not abhor them.” There is
 great reason to believe, that this new order was
 proposed by partiality, adopted by inadvertence,
 and will be abolished by reflection.

I can positively aver, that surgeons in general
 are not examined in medicine ; which is, as Mr.
 C. justly observes, the true foundation, or rather
 an essential part of the true foundation, of good
 surgical practice. I have heard a gentleman, to
 whose opinion, in general, I pay great deference,
 assert, that a good anatomist is a good surgeon,
 and that it had been so determined by the Exa-
 miners of the Company : forgetting, that medical
 knowledge may frequently supersede the neces-
 sity of operations ; and that prevention is better
 than cure. Besides, without a proper knowledge
 of diagnostics and prognostics, a man cannot be
 qualified to recommend an operation ; and, with-
 out having seen practice, he cannot be qualified
 to perform it.

That improper members have been admitted,
 and military surgeons approved, by the Court of
 Examiners, is certain : but it is rather a delicate
 point for their defenders to touch on. I venture
 to affirm, that, making allowance for the im-
 proved state of the profession, more ignorant
 persons

persons have been licensed to practise within the last thirty years, than at any former period.

A circumstance lately occurred, which proves how dangerous it is to suffer such persons to practise. A surgeon who had passed his examination at the Hall, was willing to prove his skill in midwifery. After drenching his patient with wine, without producing any effect, but fever, he sent for a more experienced practitioner, whom he desired to bring his instruments, as, he said, nothing else could be of use. Luckily he had not his own by him; otherwise the life of the patient would in all probability have been sacrificed. The person who was called in soon perceived that instruments were unnecessary; and that Nature was equal to the task. Could those who have it in their power to rectify this evil, be witnesses to one of those distressing scenes, where women in such a situation have been mal-treated, the grievance would not long remain unredressed. In the present instance, in addition to the specimen of ignorance already produced, the same gentleman recommended fruit for his patient, a few hours after delivery; and, a short time after, plenty of animal food and wine. Luckily, his advice was not followed.

Another member of the Corporation, being called to a person labouring under a violent inflammation

inflammation of the bowels, neither bled him nor directed a clyster. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the patient fell a sacrifice to his ignorance; and left the widow and fatherless to deplore the want of some law in this country, to prevent miserable charlatans from committing their ravages with impunity. To neglect imposing some salutary restraint on such pretenders, is to sanction the murders they commit. This man is said to have been a *dissector*; and might therefore shine in his examination at Surgeons' Hall; but if he goes on at this rate, he will soon *dissect* all those, who are so unfortunate as to fall under his hands.

Since Mr. C. and other advocates for the late bill of infamous memory, boldly challenge exclusive honours and rewards for the *mere* surgeon, whom it is now the fashion to call a *pure* surgeon, and insinuate that the prosperity and improvement of the profession depend on him alone, it becomes necessary to correct that misrepresentation.

Many valuable and important discoveries and improvements have been made in surgery by professed anatomists, and others, who practised more than one branch of the profession. Whatever may be the merits of the present members of the Corporation, the art itself is advanced to a de-

gree of perfection before unknown. Exclusive of the improvements made by *surgeons*, who combine other branches of the medical profession with their own, the discoveries made by Haller, and other physicians, are of no small importance; and that of the circulation of the blood by Harvey, is certainly of the first magnitude. The merit of discovering that the lacteals and other lymphatics, compose one grand absorbent system, whether it is due to Dr. Hunter or to Dr. Monro, militates against Mr. C.'s argument, and confirms what he quotes from Dr. Gregory; a passage which I shall translate. "The sacred stream of Science, "which we now contemplate and venerate; "wonderful and immense! derived from a small "and unknown fountain, flows from age to "age: at first a rivulet, it increases gradually "to a mighty flood, by the many but slow additions which it receives, and by the conflux "of innumerable rills on every side; either of "which alone, compared with so great a bulk, "seems to contribute scarce any thing to its "magnitude; but all together, by the accumulation of all their waters, form at length the "vast and delightful stream that we behold; "refreshing the happy fields through which it "flows, and rendering them fruitful."

When Mr. C. wishes to prove that physic and surgery ought to be separated, he tells us, those
who

who practised them together, were deified and adored by a people well acquainted with the policy of nations. When he wishes to augment the power of the Governors of the Corporation, he admits, they have abused the power with which they were before entrusted. When he wishes to convince us, that no improvements are to be expected but from particular parts, he tells us that improvements are derived from all quarters. When he gives us Gregory's description of the stream of Science, he gives us an opportunity of turning the stream of argument against himself. In short, he wages war like a Dutchman; and furnishes his opponents with arms.

Since Mr. C. declares a knowledge of the theory of medicine to be the true foundation of good surgical practice, I beg to know of him, what theory of medicine inculcates a continuance of repellents for more than a fortnight, in an inflammation of the breast, attended with increasing tension and pain? A person labouring under such a complaint, and so treated, applied to me. The induration of the tumor, and the rigidity of the integuments, were such as I never witnessed on any similar occasion. The patient complained much of the bad management of the case, and expressed a fear, it might become cancerous. She told me that a gentleman had attended her above a fortnight; and had applied nothing but

a cooling kind of water ; from which she was so far from receiving any benefit, that she daily grew worse. I directed a linseed poultice, by the emollient quality of which, the abscess burst the next day ; and after some time, by the continuance of the same application, she perfectly recovered.

As Mr. C. is fond of quoting passages to prove what every surgeon knows, I will quote one or two from Bell's System of Surgery, to prove what it is a shame for any surgeon not to know. Speaking of an inflammation of the breast, he says, " In the first stages of the disorder, discussion of the tumor should always be attempted, while it would be in vain, and highly improper, to advise it when the swelling has been of such duration, as to have *any tendency to suppurate.*" The same author enumerates the different external remedies which, in his opinion, are most to be trusted. He then informs us, that by these, " and by the rest of the treatment advised above, almost every tumor of this kind will be removed ; *unless the inflammation has been of long continuance before the remedies are employed: in which case, if the pain and tension are considerable, it will always be more advisable to endeavour to bring the tumor to suppurate, than to attempt any other method of cure.*"

Since

Since Mr. C. has finished his *Défence* of the Surgeons' bill, and may be supposed to have done reading the histories of the different universities, and other learned societies of Europe ; since he has finished his *history of surgery*, I would advise him to study the first elements of its *practice*. He will be better qualified to judge of the merit of other practitioners, when he is a little more initiated in the art : and his opinion concerning the abilities of other practitioners will have more weight, when he has established the reputation of his own.

As a considerable part of Mr. C.'s pamphlet is so totally irrelevant to the point in question, we cannot read it without regretting that any professional man should have wasted so much time. Besides other frivolous and insignificant inquiries which he made, he informs us, that after a long and tedious research, he has not been able to find, " that any surgeon was stately appointed " to attend the King's person, before the year " 1360, when Richard de Wy was made surgeon to Edward III." How much better would Mr. C. have been employed, if he had been reading about the virtues of a *linseed poultice* !

It is no new thing, for ignorant pretenders to depreciate and decry the talents of such as know
more

more than themselves. The farcastic and illiberal reflections thrown out at Surgeons' Hall by self-elected censors, who have undergone no test of ability for that office, might be borne. The taunts of the framers and defenders of the Surgeons' bill might be endured with patience: their venom carries with it an antidote. But when the professional characters of individuals are attacked, in order to prejudice the public mind, and to influence the decision of the Legislature, however we may scorn the calumny as far as regards our private interest; yet as members of society, and all equally bound to promote the cause of truth and justice, and of the public good, to the utmost of our power; a disclosure of facts is loudly called for, and silence would now become a crime.

Our great translator of Homer quotes a passage from Plutarch to show, that in certain cases a person may be permitted to speak of his own actions, without being guilty of ostentation: one instance is, "*where he is injuriously dealt with.*" According to this maxim, no persons have a greater right to speak of themselves, than the majority of the members of the Corporation of Surgeons; for none have been treated with greater injustice.

Vanity

Vanity would never have induced the author of these remarks to publish the following account of certain cases which have fallen under his care, or under his observation; and, together with a number of others which he could easily relate, have long ago convinced him, that the mere surgeon is not possessed of the infallibility, or even superiority ascribed to him by the prejudiced and ignorant. As a proof of this, no one of the cases has ever been published till now: nor would they have been published now, had they not been extorted by the most illiberal insinuations, and the most obstinate perseverance in injustice.

A coachman, after an uncommon exposure to cold, had a very considerable swelling of the glands of the neck, followed by suppuration. When the abscess burst, the discharge of matter was profuse. In consequence of ulceration, an alarming hæmorrhage took place; on which account I was sent for. While I was applying the remedy for this symptom, he informed me, he had a letter to admit him into the Lock Hospital; and had seen the surgeon, who allowed he was a fit object for the charity; and that he was to be received into the house as soon as there was a vacancy.

Upon

Upon inquiring into the particulars of the case, I was convinced the surgeon of the Lock, (not one of the present surgeons of that institution), had mistaken the nature of his disease. The inguinal, as well as the cervical glands, were affected: besides which, he had a tumor on the external part of the leg; a violent cough, and intolerable rheumatic pains. After a minute investigation, and mature consideration, of all the circumstances of the disorder, I was confident it was not of a venereal kind. He had not been affected with any of the original symptoms of that disease; nor with blotches on the skin; although he had now been ill above a year and half. Another argument to confirm this opinion was, that his wife, and child of a few months old, were in perfect health.

With such glaring proofs, that the disease was of a scrophulous nature, I dissuaded him from going into the Hospital; where he was to have been salivated: a process, which in a person much emaciated, affected with hectic symptoms, and labouring under extreme debility, promised nothing but a speedy period to his existence. I therefore undertook to attend him; and must beg leave to observe, I could have no interest in that offer, as he was at this time partly supported by Saint George's parish, and partly by charity. The ulcerations were so deep, and extensive,

that all the muscles of the anterior part, and sides of the neck, were perfectly denuded, and partly destroyed, down to the shoulders. The discharge was fetid and excessive. There were a number of sinuses, which would not heal till they were opened. At first, it required full three quarters of an hour every day to dress him ; and for the space of six months, at least half an hour. From that period, I sometimes left him to be dressed by others, and only called once in two or three days. It was above two years after I first attended him, before the sores of the neck were healed : and I had little reason to suppose it possible, that he could live till they were healed.

In the mean time all the complaints abated, excepting the abscess of the leg. That had increased to a considerable size. As his former means of support were in a great measure withdrawn, and he was now scarce able to walk, and required a nurse to attend him, and other necessities, which his situation could not afford ; I advised him to procure a letter, and go into Saint Bartholomew's Hospital. He accordingly procured a letter, and applied for admission ; but was told by the surgeon, whose turn it was to admit patients, that his was not a proper case for the Hospital ; that it would be dangerous to

B b

open

open the tumor, and when it broke he must die.

Notwithstanding I saw no reason to apprehend any immediate danger from opening this abscess, as it did not lie in the way of any large artery, being very prominent, yet I was aware what censure I should incur, if the event proved unfavourable. After some time, however, having repeatedly explained to him that he could not possibly mend, but must unavoidably grow worse, from delay; and knowing that the matter lay under a fascia, not likely to burst spontaneously, till the limb was rendered incurable; and having his implicit assent, and even request, that I would act as I thought proper, I opened the tumor, and discharged a vast quantity of thin pus. No alarming symptom occurred during a fortnight; at the end of which time, he caught a violent cold, which occasioned considerable inflammation and tumefaction of the leg. He now resided at Islington, for the sake of the air; and had for some time earned his subsistence by carrying out small parcels from an inn. As by the change in his complaint he was rendered unable to support himself, and was at too great a distance for me to attend him, I once more advised him to go into an hospital. He accordingly went into Guy's Hospital; where the surgeon, under whose care he happened to be, proposed ampu-

amputation ; but was over-ruled by another, more advanced in years. After a short time, he proposed to lay open the whole fibula by an incision ; declaring the patient would not recover, till that bone came entirely away ; but it might not come away for six or eight months.

Terrified at the thoughts of so dreadful, and as he conceived, so unnecessary an operation, the patient asked leave to go out ; and came to consult me on the occasion. He was again much emaciated ; and only a small part of the fibula seemed to be carious ; which made the proposal appear the more extraordinary. I advised him not to consent to the operation : upon which he informed me, that unless he submitted to it, the surgeon told him, he must leave the hospital in the course of a few days. I comforted him, by declaring, that no incision was necessary to be made ; as only a small part of the bone was diseased ; and, whenever it exfoliated, it would either come away of its own accord, or might easily be extracted by any surgeon who lived in his neighbourhood.

This advice he followed ; and called on me twice or three times, with small exfoliations of the fibula ; during which the leg regularly mended ; and, after a few months, he perfectly regained his pristine health and vigour.

I have had the best opportunity of seeing the permanency of this cure. The surgeon who formed an unfavourable prognostic, was one celebrated for acumen of judgment; and perhaps unequalled in this or any other country. The surgeon who thrice rescued this devoted victim from the jaws of destruction, was an obscure practitioner, and a *student in bell-metal mortars*; not one of those, on whom *the improvement and prosperity of the art immediately depend*.

Were a strict and impartial inquiry made into the comparative talents of medical men, it would be found, that external appearances, situation, and rank in life, which are the gifts of fortune, prejudice the mind; and command more respect than intrinsic merit; of which, as Mr. Warren justly observed in the House of Lords, mankind are not proper judges. In forming an estimate of this sort, the particulars of the different cases which have fallen under the care of a practitioner must be investigated; his treatment of those cases considered; and his reasons for such treatment. The success of his practice ought to be inquired into; as a probable criterion of his skill, and attention. It is not from the multitude of operations a man has performed, that we can judge of his ability: surgeons ought not to be estimated, like Indians, by their number of scalps,

Had

Had the authors of the Surgeons' bill, and their sycophants, observed a little more moderation, and been content with founding their own praise, without calumniating those who are something more than *simple* surgeons, the same charity which taught us forbearance before, would teach it still. But when, emboldened by non-resistance, they proclaim themselves the fountains of all knowledge, and all others as unworthy to follow in their train, justice compels us to check their presumption. Former members of the Court of Examiners have, indeed, reflected lustre on that sphere: but, alas! those bright luminaries are set; and Science now seems to look on Surgeons' Hall with a malign aspect,

“ As when the sun, new-ris'n,
Looks thro' the horizontal, misty sphere,
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dull eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations; and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.”

Here I may be suspected, like the author of the foregoing lines, to allude to *royalty in disgrace*. The monarchs of Surgeons' Hall, are, indeed, perplexed, and fear a change. The rod of their tyranny is broken by their own violence; their glories are eclipsed; and the throne of their despotism totters to its foundation.

We

We are assured by Mr. C. that the merits of the Colleges of Edinburgh, and Dublin, cannot be greater than those of the Governors of the Corporation of Surgeons of London. If so, they will bear the touchstone of examination; and emerge more bright from every trying ordeal, like gold from the refining fire.

I shall add a few more cases to that which I before adduced; to prove at once, that the deserts of examining and hospital surgeons have been over-rated, and those of other surgeons depreciated in proportion.

A woman who had been for some time affected with a slight peripneumony, applied to me on account of a large tumor which made its appearance in the lumbar region. On account of the importance of the case, I wished her to consult another surgeon with me. She therefore consulted a gentleman before alluded to, whose opinion was held in the highest estimation; an hospital surgeon, and a member of the Court of Examiners. He recommended a plaster; and advised that the tumor should be left to break spontaneously: adding, that although it might not break for six months, he would not wish it to be opened. When the abscess broke, I met him again in consultation; and although it had broken at a considerable distance from the bottom,

tom, so that there was no depending drain, he would not consent to any other alteration, but a trifling enlargement of the orifice.

With this management, I scarcely need inform any experienced practitioner, that the patient grew worse and worse. I explained my opinion to Sir William Fordyce; who at the same time attended as a physician. He told me, that his ideas accorded with mine; that the abscess ought to have been opened at the most depending part: that he had a dispute with the same gentleman, about a similar case, some years before, but could not carry his point, and his patient had died. Sir William had been a practitioner of pharmacy, *a student in bell-metal mortars*, as well as a surgeon; and therefore could not be supposed to understand surgery so well, as one who understood nothing else.

I was obliged to submit. The consequence was, that from the lodgment of matter, an abscess at length took place in the other loin; and the disease proved fatal.

Some time after, I attended a gentleman with a complaint of the same kind, but much worse, he being far more reduced. In this case, I was so fortunate as to meet in consultation another surgeon; one of considerable eminence; who is
still

still living, but retired. We agreed that the matter ought to be discharged. This surgeon told the patient, that he would recommend something to be applied to the tumor, previous to my making the puncture, which would deaden the part, and *prevent him from feeling any pain*. My readers will be surprised to hear, that this was a caustic. I was then not sufficiently established in business or reputation, to overcome the prejudice in favour of so respectable a practitioner. However, I told the patient my own opinion; which he found true. I was also advised by the same gentleman, to open the abscess about two days after the application of the caustic; and to use a canula, to keep the orifice open, and promote the discharge.

This gentleman never saw the patient again. I pursued his plan. The caustic gave exquisite pain for four hours. Two days after, I opened the abscess by puncturing the eschar; and discharged a pint and a half of matter. As soon as the orifice was in a state to admit of it, I introduced the canula: but, though short, it injured the internal parts so much, and occasioned such violent pain in walking, that I determined to leave it off. No one can blame me for trying the *caustic* as an *anodyne*, and the *canula* instead of a *tent*: they were recommended by one of those surgeons, *on whom*
the

the improvement and prosperity of the art immediately depend.

Instead of the canula, I introduced a tent, over which I laid a doffil of lint; and covered the whole with a large plaster; in order to allow and encourage the discharge of matter, and exclude the air.

On the second day, about half a pint of matter was evacuated; and for a month or more, about four ounces. He then went into the country, for the sake of a pure air; and in a few months was so far recovered, as to be able to walk or ride without pain. The discharge gradually lessened; and, in about fifteen months, totally ceased. For above ten years he has continued free from the complaint; and is at present in perfect health. This was a much more unpromising case than the former: the former had not been attended with much pain; but this patient had suffered excruciating tortures. He was much more emaciated; and appeared to be in a decline; so that little hope was entertained of his recovery.

A man who had cut his finger with glass, applied immediately to a surgeon; on whom he waited, by direction, every morning. A considerable degree of inflammation, and suppuration

in different parts of the hand, took place. The patient was ordered to foment and poultice the hand; but his surgeon, who is one of those *on whom the improvement and prosperity of the art immediately depend*, told him not to press out the matter on any account. This gentleman happening to be so indisposed that he could not attend to business, the patient came to me; and informed me, that by the course he had pursued, he had regularly grown worse for three weeks. I could not help expressing my surprise, that any practitioner should treat such a case in such a manner; and leave it to nature, or, in other words, to neglect. In order to facilitate the discharge of matter, I found it necessary to dilate a small orifice communicating with the original wound; and to press out the contents of the abscess twice a day. By this management, that part of the hand mended daily. I was soon after obliged to open another sinus, where an abscess had burst: but he objected to my opening a third, till he was convinced, by a long trial, that it was indispensably necessary. He now ascribes the salvation of his hand, to the fore throat which seized the practitioner to whom he first applied; and thinks his greatest escape was that from his surgeon. This gentleman, who is so fortunate as to possess that greatest merit, good connexions, is since chosen an hospital surgeon; where, as

Mr.

Mr. Chevalier justly observes, he will have an ample scope for his incomparable practice.

I attended another patient who had an abscess in the hand, with another surgeon, who also confines his practice to surgery alone. I was much surprised, that during the course of several weeks, notwithstanding the quantity of matter contained in the hand was very great, and the skin so thickened and hardened, that nature refused a vent, this gentleman would never agree to making a proper opening. At length, when the case appeared almost desperate, he consented to a small incision. I expressed a wish, that it had been done before. He replied, that there certainly was great mischief in the hand now; but that I ought to have been the best judge, as I saw the case most frequently. The fact is, that this gentleman had seen it often in every stage; but had laid it down as a rule not to be departed from, that only a puncture was to be made in any case of this kind. While this case was under my care, being much alarmed as to the event, I consulted two other eminent medical men concerning it. One, who practises only surgery, disapproved of an opening; the other, who had long served in the army, first as surgeon, and afterwards as physician, and on whom his Majesty has since conferred distinguished honours, coincided in opinion with me, that there was no

danger in opening the abscess freely. At length I divided two sinuses ; and the hand was perfectly healed in a week. Since that time, I have met with a number of instances of abscesses in the hand and arm, in all of which, the cure was accomplished in the most speedy manner, where no lodgment of matter was allowed ; and I have never yet seen a single instance, where the least injury has ensued from opening a sinus. This convinces me, that all the mischief attributed to the admission of air, except in the *bursæ mucosæ*, the joints, and the large cavities, arises from the neglect of performing the operation in due time.

I was consulted about an abscess, as large as an egg, situated near the tendon of the *rectus cruris* muscle, in a boy four years of age. Though I entertained no doubt of the propriety of letting out the matter, yet being aware of the uncertainty of the event, especially as the boy was scrophulous, I desired the parents to ask the opinion of a very eminent surgeon, who was attending a patient in the same house. This gentleman, who was a very celebrated anatomist, was not always equally correct in his surgical ideas ; though he practised no branch of the medical profession but surgery. He advised that the child should be taken to the sea, and bathed ; but that the abscess should not be opened.

As

As it was not convenient for the friends of the child to go to the salt water with him, and the abscess increased rapidly, threatening his limb, and even his life, I expressed my opinion, that there was a much greater chance of cure from opening the abscess, than from bathing in the sea; that the delay of the operation was extremely dangerous; and, if it appeared necessary, he might be bathed in the sea at any future time.

To this opinion his parents readily assented. A seton was passed through the tumor, and retained a few days; when the degree of inflammation which arose, pointed out the necessity of removing it. The part was dressed with a mild ointment; and a cure completed in a fortnight from the operation. This is one instance, among many others which I have seen, to prove, that it is as safe to open scrophulous abscesses as any others: but it would be unreasonable to expect, that a cure can be as certain in a weak habit, as in a strong one.

I consulted the same surgeon respecting a case of abscess of the knee, in a young man, arising from contusion. He had been three months in an hospital; and was then advised to try his native air. As he was going to the place by sea, this gentleman, who placed too much confidence in salt water, desired him to try it in the different
forms

forms of immersion, lotion, and cataplasin; and also to drink it. The town to which he went was a bathing-place; but neither the means already mentioned, nor any others recommended by an able surgeon under whose care he was in the country, availed any thing. After some months had elapsed, he returned to town; and applied again to me. The disease had increased, and not only the bones forming the joint of the knee were enlarged; but the abscess was ready to burst near the patella.

After this event, I waited till I had seen the progress of the complaint; and as, in addition to local symptoms, hectic fever, and a wasting of flesh, portended inevitable destruction to the patient, unless it were averted by an operation performed without loss of time, I told my opinion to his mother; who was so imprudent as to inform him of it rather abruptly. Upon hearing this, he expressed a wish to go into an hospital; in which I assisted him. The surgeons there flattered him with almost a certain prospect of a cure. The means employed to accomplish that end, consisted principally in mercury rubbed into the joint. It would be an insult to the understanding of my readers, to inform them what success attended this process. Mercury is certainly a most valuable remedy in some diseases; but, used as it is at present, it resembles the god who presides
over

over it; who sends many a soul to the shades; and is represented with *winged feet*.

This unfortunate young man was at length dismissed from the hospital. He returned into the country: where amputation was performed, and he died anafarcous, at the end of three weeks!

Were I to relate the particulars of the great number of cancers which I have seen prove fatal, through the neglect of those gentlemen, on whom the improvement and prosperity of the art depend, according to Mr. Chevalier, who affirms that their merits cannot possibly be greater than they are, I should tire the reader's patience, and excite feelings that would be painful. I shall, however, mention a few cases, in order to show, that the practitioners alluded to are so far from having any thing to boast of, that they will find it difficult to justify their conduct.

No error is more common, or more fatal, than that of making a distinction between a scirrhus and a cancer. No man is worthy of the name of a surgeon, who does not discern, and attempt to crush, that cockatrice in the egg.

Instead of this, I have known a *pure surgeon*, an Examiner, assure a lady, that a scirrhus, accompanied

complicated with lancinating pains, and a sense of scalding heat extending over the whole side, *would not be attended with any material inconvenience, if she should live twenty years.* I had before informed her husband, that I had no hope from any remedy, but extirpation; which opinion proved too true; for, in little more than a month, the tumor was grown so large and so painful, that another surgeon who was consulted with me, declared it must be removed. Accordingly I removed it; and the patient recovered.

I was applied to by a lady, who perceived a tumor in the breast, in consequence of a bruise. From the state in which I found the breast, I gave the same opinion to her husband as in the former case. Nevertheless, to avoid any appearance of too much precipitation, I applied leeches; and called in another surgeon, an Examiner, in consultation. He flattered the patient much more than I could in conscience do: whether from error of judgment, or from interest, I cannot say. As the progress of the case by no means justified any opinion he gave, first or last, during the course of four or five months, it must evidently be owing to one of those causes. The patient attributed his *favourable* opinion of the case to *interest*. I must candidly confess, I ascribed it to a *different cause*.

It is needless to say, that a number of remedies were tried in this case, though I had at first given my opinion to the gentleman called in consultation, that I had never known one of them succeed ; *in which he agreed with me.* In proportion as the case grew more desperate, he flattered the patient the more with hopes of a cure. At length, after ringing changes with mercury and cicuta, which have destroyed more cancerous patients than all the other medicines in the world, by deluding the unhappy sufferer with false hopes, and preventing a timely recourse to the only remedy, he confessed that amputation must no longer be deferred. This was accordingly performed, and the wound healed ; but the disease had affected the whole habit, from neglect ; and soon after appeared in various parts of the body. Over its melancholy termination, I beg leave to draw a veil.

I was consulted about a scirrhus tumor of the breast, near the axilla, which had been perceived a year and a half, in a girl about fifteen years of age. Though decided in opinion as to the necessity of removing it, I did not chuse to propose an operation, without the sanction of some other surgeon. The gentleman whose opinion was asked, recommended remedies which have seldom or never answered the expectations of the practitioner. At our second meeting, the disease had

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made

made a progress; and when he proposed to try the same remedies for some time longer, I expressed my opinion, that they were not likely to effect a cure. To this he replied, that the operation would not be a trifling one; and he did not conclude the disease to be of a cancerous nature, *as he did not know what such a young girl could have to do with a cancerous humour.* Such language and sentiments are fitter for a nurse than for a surgeon. He gave such false hopes to the patient and her friends, that I was told by them, they would not trouble me to call again, as they could not afford to pay more than one surgeon. I call them *false* hopes in more respects than one: in the first place, because they were contrary to his real opinion, expressed to me in private; in the next, because they proved fallacious. When we met the second or third time, he said, in the hearing of the patient and her mother, he thought I had taken off the breast: this was an unguarded, if not an insidious expression; as I had never advised, or proposed the operation: but confessed to him in private, that I did not expect to see the complaint cured; that at first I should have thought it advisable to perform it, but was afterwards doubtful, from the increase of the disorder, if it would not be too late.

He informed the mother of the patient, he did not doubt of curing the complaint, by a few pills and a
course

course of sea bathing. Prejudiced against me by misrepresentation, and beguiled by fair promises, they dismissed me. They were of opinion that I wished to remove the part, at a time when I had told three of their friends the contrary: for I thought it too late. This gentleman, who is an Examiner, now knows, that a young girl *may have something to do with a cancer.*

I was consulted by another patient, for a similar complaint. She had before applied to another surgeon; who had given her mercury. Instead of her receiving any relief from this medicine, hectic symptoms supervened, and emaciation; which, from the wasting of the cellular membrane, and consequent flaccidity of the breast, made her suppose the two scirrhus tumors diminished.

After mature consideration, and a cautious introduction of the subject, I recommended amputation of the part affected; to which the patient replied, that she could not form sufficient resolution at present; but if she could make up her mind, she would apply to me again. A few weeks after, I was sent for, to attend her for a peripneumony. As soon as this complaint was removed, she again spoke concerning the scirrhus tumors. They had increased in size, and the pain was become more acute. Instead of two, there

were now three; and two in the other breast. We consulted a late eminent surgeon, also celebrated as an anatomist; who gave his opinion, that as it was *too soon* to think of any operation, he would try a liniment which he mentioned. My only reason for consulting another surgeon in that case was, that I thought it *too late* for an operation. His liniment, together with leeches applied frequently, proved useless. The patient, after trying the various remedies proposed by him and others, dragged on a miserable existence; and at length fell a victim to that dreadful disease, a cancer.

Not many years have elapsed, since it was the fashion to brand surgeons with an accusation of cruelty to their patients; and to call them butchers. I hope this charge was ill-founded: but certain I am, that many of the surgeons of the present day run into the contrary extreme. I have repeatedly heard a surgeon say: "My patient has requested me to take off a leg." This is an imputation on the practitioner; for no patient would be likely to make that request, till the surgeon had proved himself unable to perform a cure, and unwilling to propose an operation. Such surgeons would do well to reflect, that it is not an indifference to the sufferings of the patient, but a regard for his welfare, which can reconcile any practitioner to that desperate remedy:

—immedi-

— immedicabile vulnus

Ense rescindendum, ne pars sincera trahatur.

To avoid an imputation of neglect, and at the same time a charge of cruelty, those gentlemen call an occult cancer a scirrhus, a tumor, a lump, a scrophulous disease; or, in short, any thing, in order to cover their timidity, and their anxious concern for *their own reputation*.

Mr. Pott, after observing that the extirpation of scirrhus tumors, while they continue *indolent*, has often proved successful, and the patient has continued free from any complaint of this kind during life, gives his opinion, that this is, and ever will be, a sufficient reason for *pressing* such operation for indolent tumors, when all other circumstances are favourable. He adds, “ that “ the scirrhus would remain through life indolent “ and inoffensive, is very improbable.” He tells us, that “ when a scirrhus is favourably circum- “ stanced, and so situated as that it may be ex- “ tirpated, such extirpation is the only remedy.” After reading these remarks, how have I been surprised to hear those surgeons, on whom, according to Mr. Chevalier, the improvement and prosperity of the art immediately depend, affirm, in scirrhus and cancerous cases of long standing, where the tumors were grown large, and the shooting pains violent, that they saw no pressing occasion for an operation!

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I was lately consulted by a surgeon, concerning a cancer of the breast of eight years duration. He had before consulted another practitioner; a gentleman of great eminence. We all concurred in opinion, that no cure could be expected, but from amputation; and that amputation was still advisable, as the disease was confined to the breast. A day was fixed for the operation; but the patient was prevailed on by a relation, first to ask the opinion of a surgeon with whom he was acquainted; one of those, on whom, it is said, *the improvement and prosperity of the art depend*. He said, he was surprised how the gentlemen who had seen the patient, could think of proposing the knife. My readers will imagine he thought it *too late*. Quite the reverse: he thought it *too early*. As a proof of which, after taking the patient out of the hands of her own surgeon, he promised to cure her in a month: but was so far from fulfilling his promise, that he left her worse than he found her.

As a humble remonstrance to this gentleman, and others, who may call themselves *pure* surgeons, I beg leave to transcribe a few passages from Bell's excellent System of Surgery. That author, as well as the three surgeons who agreed in opinion concerning the forementioned case, has studied and practised something besides surgery. I shall leave it to the world to decide, which

which kind of surgeon ought to be called *pure*,
and which *impure*.

The celebrated author above mentioned, in the chapter on the amputation of cancerous breasts, says : “ We have elsewhere shown, that cancer, “ on its first appearance, is perhaps, in every in- “ stance, a local affection only ; that the cancer- “ ous diathesis is produced, not by any original “ affection in the constitution, but by absorption “ from a local ulcer ; and hence we concluded, “ that every cancerous sore should be removed “ by immediate amputation, wherever this can be “ practised.”

“ This, we think, ought to be an established “ maxim, in the treatment of all cases of cancer, “ wherever they are situated ; but from their be- “ ing, as we have said, more apt to infect the ge- “ neral system when seated on the mammæ than “ on other parts of the body, this is an additional “ reason for early amputation in every cancerous “ affection of the breast.”

“ As every scirrhus gland in this part, is apt “ to degenerate into a real cancer, and as indura- “ tions of this nature have hitherto resisted the “ effects of every other remedy, we should on “ every occasion advise their removal by early “ amputation. This, we know, is a point, with “ respect

“ respect to which practitioners are not univer-
 “ sally agreed ; as it is alleged by some, that
 “ scirrhus glands in the mammæ have been
 “ known to remain in an indolent, inoffensive
 “ state, for a great length of time ; and there-
 “ fore, that their removal ought never to be at-
 “ tempted, till they have actually proceeded to a
 “ state of ulceration.

“ But this opinion, which is evidently founded
 “ in *timidity*, has been the cause of much unne-
 “ cessary distress to such individuals as have fol-
 “ lowed it ; and has brought the operation of
 “ amputating cancerous breasts into a degree of
 “ general discredit, which it does not merit.
 “ There is no fact of which I am more convinced,
 “ than that many more would recover by means
 “ of the operation, were it employed in a more
 “ early period of the disease, particularly while the
 “ glands are still in a scirrhus state, and before
 “ any matter is formed in them ; and as instances
 “ of their remaining in an *indolent* state for any
 “ considerable length of time are *very rare*, no
 “ dependence should be placed on their doing
 “ so. It is not a single instance or two, on
 “ which, in matters of this kind, an opinion
 “ ought to be formed : it is the result of general
 “ observation which ought to direct us ; and
 “ every unbiassed practitioner must confess, that
 “ what

“ what we have here asserted respecting this mat-
 “ ter, is, at least in general, well-founded.

“ The propriety of early amputation of
 “ scirrhus breasts being admitted, and the prac-
 “ tice established, it may possibly happen in a
 “ few instances, that scirrhus tumors of this
 “ part may be removed, which might have re-
 “ mained in an indolent state for some time
 “ longer. But as this will not frequently hap-
 “ pen; as we have no means by which we can
 “ judge with certainty between such cases as
 “ might remain for some time in this indolent
 “ state; and those, the progress of which would
 “ prove more rapid; and especially, as the ad-
 “ vantages derived from early amputation are
 “ great, no hesitation should occur in putting it
 “ *universally* in practice.

“ When practitioners, therefore, have an op-
 “ portunity of amputating cancerous or scirrhus
 “ breasts early, they ought *always* to embrace it.”

Mr. Pott, in his Remarks on the Necessity of Amputation, in certain cases, makes use of the following arguments, which may be employed, *mutatis mutandis*, in defence of operations in general, and in defence of having timely recourse to them, when they appear necessary.

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“ When

“ When a judicious man says, that a limb
 “ ought to be removed, it is not to be supposed he
 “ means to say, that it is absolutely impossible,
 “ at all events, that such limb can be saved, nor
 “ that such patient must infallibly die, if the
 “ operation be not performed; no, he only
 “ means, that from repeated experience of him-
 “ self and others, in all times, it has been found,
 “ that the circumstances above mentioned put the
 “ patient’s life much more to hazard in an at-
 “ tempt to save the limb, than the operation does
 “ in removing it; and therefore, that humanity
 “ as well as judgment determine for the latter.
 “ On the other hand it must be allowed, that
 “ from some of the worst of these cases, some
 “ have had the good fortune to escape; but es-
 “ capes they so truly are, that I make no scruple
 “ to affirm, that in certain cases and circum-
 “ stances, a determination not to amputate, is a
 “ determination much more unfavourable and
 “ hazardous to the patient, than that for amputa-
 “ tion can be.”

This opinion, sanctioned not only by the two
 great improvers of the art, whom I have just
 quoted, but by the suffrage of many other able
 men, I oppose to the mal-practice before alluded
 to; and recommend a careful perusal of it to all
 surgeons, *both young and old*. It may be full as
 useful to them, as reading histories of the Uni-
 versity

verfity of Paris, or Rymer's *Fœdera*; or as a tedious examination into a heap of old mufty records, in order to afcertain whether Richard de Wy was the firft barber-furgeon ftatedly appointed to attend the king's perfon, and to mow the crops of the royal head and chin.

After all the panegyrics pronounced on the framers of the Surgeons' bill, by themfelves and their dependants, let any one fcruutinize their practice with the critical eye of a professional man; let him recollect, what advances towards perfection have been made in the art itfelf, what excellent practical treatifes have been written, what excellent fchools of furgery are eftablifhed in this metropolis. Let him then read the account I have given of the practice of thofe, who afpire to abfolute dominion over the Corporation; and fay, whether he perceives the marks of fupremacy ftamped on their foreheads; whether their talents appear more exquisite, or their ingenuity and fkill of a divine original, more than thofe of other men.

I fhall add another fpecimen or two, of the manner in which fome of thofe practitioners treat other cafes that fall under their care. I attended a gentleman, who had a fracture of the olecranon; that is, the procefs of the ulna forming the elbow. In a fracture of this bone, or of the

patella, which corresponds to it in the lower extremity, it is still the custom, as it formerly was in all other fractures, to keep the limb extended. This position of the fractured portions of the bone brings them as near as possible into contact; and expedites their reunion.

It is well known, that rest is commonly deemed necessary for a fractured limb. In the present case, I was over-ruled by one of the gentlemen alluded to; who had superior influence, from prejudices entertained in his favour by the patient. He desired that the fore-arm might be kept in a state of flexion; and that I would make use of a rotatory motion of the limb every day, to prevent that motion from being lost, by an archylosis between the radius and ulna. In spite of these impediments, some degree of union took place between the fractured parts, by the intervention of a ligamentous substance; but by the means recommended by the same practitioner, to overcome the rigidity of the joint, occasioned by long-continued inflammation from the original accident, the tendon was ruptured, and the whole scheme rendered abortive. Whether this practice can be considered as an improvement, I shall leave to Mr. Chevalier to determine.

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On the same day that I bound up this fracture, I also bound up a fractured olecranon for a general officer far advanced in years; who had been thrown down in the street by robbers, and fallen on his elbow. In this case, the olecranon was shattered into five pieces: nevertheless, by means of plaster, bandage, rest, and keeping the limb in a state of extension, a perfect cure was accomplished in a month.

It is, or ought to be, well known to all surgeons, that in a strangulated hernia, mortification may commence in a few hours. Being sent for by a woman labouring under this alarming disease, I had recourse to the usual methods; but not reducing the hernia, I called in another surgeon; a man of great eminence. He likewise failed in his efforts: but recommended repeated trials, and the exertion of more force than I thought prudent, in order to overcome the difficulty. I was decidedly of opinion, that the operation would have been less dangerous; but was obliged to bow to such great authority. To avoid giving her friends much trouble, the patient went into an hospital. This was two days after she perceived the strangulation. There, the first day was partly lost, and partly spent in idle attempts to reduce the rupture. The next day, a consultation was held, and it was judged *too soon* for the operation; on the day following, there

there was another consultation ; and it was then judged *too late*. This opinion rested on good grounds, diarrhæa, coldness of the extremities, and a total cessation of pain. Notwithstanding all these irrefragable proofs that the case was desperate, one of the surgeons who had previously assisted in the consultation, and joined in deciding that all attempts were hopeless, went again to the hospital in the evening, and performed the operation. The poor woman survived *till the next morning*.

— Quis, talia fando,

Temperet a lacrymis ?

This case, I hope not common, the gentleman whom I had consulted, proposed to lay before the governors of the hospital ; but as I suspected personal animosity had some share in suggesting that measure, I dissuaded him from it. Even now, though compelled by truth and justice to deny the superiority of professional talents which the framers of the bill arrogate to themselves, it is with reluctance I bring forward these facts. It would be a crime to dissemble, and to conceal them at this time, when every artifice is employed to depreciate the professional characters of the members of the Corporation at large, in the estimation of the public, for the sake of perpetuating an odious monopoly, and grati-

gratifying a despotic junto with an increase of despotism.

It is well known, that from an amputation of the leg below the knee, after the common method, the joint of the knee is rendered useless; and the stump is kept in a bent state, projecting backwards, and causing a considerable inconvenience and deformity. The unfortunate sufferer finds walking a severe labour, and often thinks life dearly purchased on such terms.

To remedy this evil, various means have been devised; but none that deserved general approbation, till Mr. Allanson of Liverpool discovered, that healing by the first intention was practicable in capital operations. By reviving the flap-operation for the leg, and availing himself of his inestimable discovery, he has probably rendered a greater service to the world, than any other surgeon of this, or of any age, or country.

By his improved method of operating, the patient preserves the use of the joint, and walks with ease and pleasure. These remarks I have, in other parts of this publication, in some measure anticipated; not intending to insert particular cases here: but undeserved aspersions, repeatedly cast on the professional characters of the opponents of the late Surgeons' bill, have
since

since challenged a disclosure of the whole truth.

Having had some share in introducing that improvement into this great metropolis, where the operation had been performed only once before, excepting one unsuccessful attempt in an hospital, I showed the case to several professional men, with an intention of recommending a similar operation instead of that in common use; the gentlemen on whom *the improvement and prosperity of the art* are said to depend, not having condescended, at that time, to adopt it. The operation had succeeded, and the cure was complete; when I was so unfortunate as to introduce one of the supporters of the late bill to the patient, who advised, that he should have a long strip of sticking-plaster applied to the part, in order to prevent a retraction of the gastrocnemius muscle. I remarked, that the skin was irritable, and had been excoriated by the slips of adhesive plaster which had already been applied. To this he answered, that he had a sort of sticking-plaster, which never produced any such effect. I knew at the time, this must be a mistake; and have seen different instances since, to confirm that opinion; but, from the confidence with which it was pronounced, his assertion gained credit with the by-standers, especially from the gentleman's holding

holding a situation of some rank. The consequence however was, that I had nearly lost all the reputation I had acquired by the case. An excoriation, as large as the plaster, took place ; which confined the patient much longer than the operation had done ; and was not healed without great difficulty. The same gentleman, when consulted about a disease confined to *the thigh*, declared it was a *lumbar abscess*.

Of such members is the Court of Assistants principally composed. Yet, to two respectful applications from the opponents of the late bill, made at the instance of Lord Thurlow, before his Lordship had declared his opinion of them to the world, the members of that Court did not deign to give an answer ; and, after a conference, held in consequence of a third application, they returned a contemptuous reply.

After recapitulating the propositions offered by the deputation of their opponents, the deputation of the Court of Assistants produced, at the second interview, the following resolution :

“ The propositions stated by the deputies have
 “ been submitted to the Court of Assistants ; and
 “ two of them having been represented as indis-
 “ pensable, viz. That all officers be elected
 “ annually, by ballot of the members of the
 F f “ Corpora-

“ Corporation at large ; and that there be no
 “ disqualifying bye-law, so far as regards the
 “ practice of midwifery and pharmacy :

“ The Court have consequently taken these
 “ propositions into their consideration ; and have
 “ instructed their committee to inform the depu-
 “ ties, that they are unanimously of opinion,
 “ that public utility, as well as their duty, call
 “ upon them unequivocally to declare ; that, to
 “ admit the proposed alterations in the act of
 “ Parliament, by which the Corporation of Sur-
 “ geons has been governed for upwards of fifty
 “ years, and under the influence of which the
 “ public have been greatly benefited, and the
 “ profession of surgery been rapidly rising in repu-
 “ tation, would be *degrading to its professors, and*
 “ *abandoning the service of the public.*”

After expressing their disapprobation of these two propositions, they declare their readiness to renew the conference, in order to settle the other part of the arrangement, provided their opponents will dispense with these two demands.

The opponents of the Surgeons' bill, having gained one complete victory, were so far from wishing to *triumph over fallen enemies*, that they forgot the insults and injuries formerly received from the framers of the bill ; and again proposed
 a con-

a conference, in order to conciliate the contending members of the Corporation. To their friendly and polite overtures, a friendly and polite answer was returned. After the conference a long pause ensued,—a month at least elapsed, before an answer was returned; and we have reason to suspect, that advantage was taken of this interval, to steal a march on the members of the Corporation at large; to abuse the confidence they placed in the issue of the negotiation, to prepare a fresh bill for the subversion of their rights, and forge new chains to enthrall them.

The answer of the Court of Assistants to the proposal for an interview, breathed a spirit of moderation :

“ — but they their wonted pride

Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd

Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.”

Who would expect the authors of the Surgeons' bill, who made such an indifferent figure in the House of Lords, during the last campaign, to speak in such a lofty tone? It ill becomes the heroes of Surgeons' Hall to talk so big in the cabinet, who looked so little in the field. *Pride goeth before destruction; and a haughty spirit before a fall.*

That the public have been benefited by the institution of a Court of Examiners, although founded on erroneous principles, I shall not positively deny. Without any compliment to that tribunal, or its members, we may suppose that many students are somewhat more assiduous, from having an examination hung over their heads *in terrorem*. Thus, we admit, surgery may have flourished under its influence, as a field of corn flourishes under the influence of a *scare-crow*.

How far the Court of Examiners have discharged the duties of their office, may be determined from the following anecdote. A noble and learned Lord asked one of the principal supporters of the bill, what objection he had to allow the members of the Corporation at large a share in the management of their own affairs? The answer was, Some of them are ignorant, my Lord. To this his Lordship replied: The more shame for you, Mr. G——, to let loose a set of ignorant fellows, to poison me.

An attempt to injure the professional characters of any members of the Corporation, is rather unbecoming in those gentlemen, who grant *the vernal diploma*. To place this argument in a clearer light, I shall present my readers with the form of that diploma:

“ Know

“ Know all men by these presents, that we,
 “ the Master, Wardens, and the rest of the
 “ Court of Examiners of the Company of Sur-
 “ geons of London, to that purpose chosen and
 “ constituted by the authority of Parliament,
 “ have deliberately examined Mr. —, and do
 “ find him a fit and capable person to exercise
 “ the art and science of surgery; and we do ad-
 “ mit him to practise in the same art, according
 “ to the force, form, and effect of the statute in
 “ that case made and provided. In witness
 “ whereof we have subscribed our names; and
 “ have caused the common seal of the said Com-
 “ pany to be set to these presents.”

This declaration reduces the Court of Exa-
 miners to an unfortunate dilemma. If the suc-
 cessful candidates merit this diploma, the Court
 of Examiners injure *them* by detraction; if not,
 they injure *the public*, by granting a licence to
 commit manslaughter with impunity.

When the members of the Court of Examiners
 object to universal suffrage, and universal eligi-
 bility, and express an apprehension of being de-
 graded by such an alteration in the constitution
 of the Company, they pay themselves an ill-
 judged compliment; and betray a consciousness,
 either of their own misconduct, or of their own
 defects. *Degeneres animos timor arguit.* How
 can

can those men be worthy to be members of a Corporation, who are not worthy to be *eligible* to office? How are those men fit to practise surgery, who are not judges of the comparative merits of other surgeons, nor even worthy to be *electors*?

When therefore the officers of the Corporation refuse to submit to the choice of practitioners examined and approved by themselves, they proclaim, not the unworthiness of the members of the Corporation at large, but *their own unworthiness*, to all the world. It is not an association with such men, nor their approbation, but the fear of being rejected by them, which occasions an alarm. Whatever contempt for pharmacy these gentlemen may entertain, (for it is well known, people sometimes despise what they do not understand), none of them would be *degraded*, nor would *public utility* suffer any great detriment, if some of them were sent to learn pharmacy, which they ought to have learnt before; and others were remanded to *the pestle and mortar*, from which they sprung.

But though I disapprove of the excluding by-law, because I deem it an unjust stigma, yet I doubt if the apprehension of the Court of Examiners is well founded; that, in case of universal suffrage, their Court would be filled with
apothecaries

apothecaries. In the first place, it is natural to suppose, that hospital-surgeons, and professors of anatomy, would, in general, be preferred as Examiners. Besides, it is well known to the members of the Corporation, that mutual jealousies, and jarring interests, would commonly prevent the practitioners of pharmacy from trying to aggrandize each other. In addition to these arguments, it must be observed; that *gratitude for past*, and *hopes of future favours*, would influence all those, who have no expectations of rising to the same eminence, to vote for the practitioner who sends *them* his prescriptions.

With such advantages, the present rulers of the Company can have nothing to fear, but from superior abilities; nor even from superior abilities, till the mists of prejudice are dispelled. It is, therefore, for the sake of confirming this prejudice, that they wish to confirm their execrable bye-law by act of Parliament.

When we consider, that besides the members who have taken an active part against the bill, and those who reside at a distance, in all near eighteen hundred, the Corporation can boast the names of Osborne, Underwood, Cruikshank, Clark, and Croft, we cannot but be rather surprised, that Mr. C. should wish to ratify that opprobrious

probrious bye-law, and degrade such characters. Whether he was really the author of the book, or only fathered the offspring of another, as some suspect to have been the case, he deserves to have the fourth letter of the alphabet added to his degree; and the three letters brought into close conjunction. It might then be said, that much learning had made him *mad*.

The gentlemen whose names I have enumerated, *still* practise at least one of those branches of the profession, which Mr. C. deems inferior. Most of them *have* practised the other. Two of them are very eminent professors, whose lectures Mr. C. has attended; from which he has drawn, or might have drawn, a considerable share of anatomical, surgical, and obstetrical science. Surely, no motive of self-interest, or hope of favour from the great champion of the bill, to whom, *dum fortuna fuit*, Mr. C. seemed literally to *adhere*, could instigate him to approve of that obnoxious bye-law; and cast an unmerited reproach on those celebrated professors, to whom he is indebted for the best part of his own knowledge.

Mr. C. speaks of *inferior branches*; and as he speaks of them as just causes of exclusion from the offices of the Corporation, or College, it is evident he means pharmacy and midwifery; the
two

two only branches of the medical profession that are debarred from preferment in the Corporation. They may still cup and scarify; they may still blister and glyster; they may still “draw teeth,” “or breathe a vein.” But if they send out one potion for the colic, or bring one human creature into the world, they forfeit all claim to the honours of Surgeons’ Hall.

How unjust and unwise this prohibitory by-law is, with respect to pharmacy, I have elsewhere shown. As to midwifery, it is an art, to which those who are in the habit of disparaging it, probably owe their existence. It cannot be inferior in importance; perhaps it is superior, to any other branch of surgery, or of the medical profession. Two lives, at least, are generally concerned in it; sometimes more: and, to speak in appropriate terms, it is *pregnant with difficulties*.

A contempt for that profession, can only be harboured in low and grovelling minds. Having remained too long in the hands of the ignorant and illiterate, it has not yet quite shaken off the prejudice entertained against it, by the vulgar and uninformed: but, besides the chirurgical skill requisite for a practitioner of that art, the medical knowledge which is indispensably necessary for the due discharge of his office, ought to have ensured him respect.

Of the difficulties arising from a deformed pelvis, from a retroverted, or a contracted uterus, from uterine hemorrhages, and from convulsions in the time of labour, the healer of wounds, the bone-setter, amputator, and lithotomist, can form but a faint conjecture: how much less a man, who, it is said, acts only as a common surgeon and apothecary; and labours under all the prejudice so unjustly excited against his profession.

One of the defenders of the bill endeavours to assert the honours of surgery, by saying, that it is of a recondite and abstruse nature. How much more recondite and abstruse is the obstetric art, both from its nature, and the necessity of observing peculiar delicacy in its operations? But its practitioners have no opportunity of blazoning their fame by public exhibitions, and performances, in the theatre of an hospital. On the contrary, their judges are *old women*; who are most likely to censure, when they ought to applaud.

Mr. C. affirms, that the theory of medicine is the true basis of surgery. If so, it is rather unfortunate that any persons are permitted to practise surgery, without passing some ordeal, and giving some proofs of their understanding the elements of that science. I knew a very eminent
surgeon,

surgeon, who declared, rather in a boasting manner, and with a considerable degree of self-sufficiency, that he had never read Sydenham; and, to do him justice, I believe his declaration was true. This gentleman was of opinion, that animal food was not hurtful in the small pox; and that in another well-known complaint, no medicine was more efficacious than *bread pills*!

Another very eminent surgeon, one of the present Examiners, not above four years ago, confined his patients during the eruption of the small pox; and was afraid of letting them go across the street. The same gentleman directed stimulants to be copiously administered to a person labouring under a violent inflammatory disease of the arm: but his advice was not followed.

Should there not be some regulation, to prevent the ill effects of such empiricism; which threatens the more fatal consequences when sanctioned by great names? If surgeons are to practise in the *medical* department, let them be subject to a *medical tribunal*.

It is a practice with some of those who do not practise pharmacy, or midwifery, to call themselves *pure* surgeons. I hope they will in future *stick to their last*, and keep their *hands* pure.

The title *mere* surgeon would be full as proper. But if they will lay aside that modern phrase, and use the language of their predecessors, the world will agree to call them, as heretofore, *surgeons*; or say, Mr. — is *only a surgeon*. What havoc must have been made among their patients by *the worst* of those who are only surgeons, meddling in physic, from the numerous errors we have seen committed by the *best*! *Amicus Pott, amicus Hunter, magis amica Veritas.*

Mr. C. tells us, it has been considered as a capital defect in the bill, that it contained no provision to oblige the members of the Corporation to assemble as a literary body, for the communication of their respective observations.

He tells us, the Surgeons' Company is a *civil* institution: but there are many who differ from him in opinion; especially the army and navy surgeons, who have been treated so very *uncivilly* by menaces and extortions; and the members of the Corporation, who have suffered so much injury from oppressive bye-laws.

To be serious;—Mr. C. means, if he means any thing, that it is a society founded on a broad basis; intended to promote a public purpose; that it is a national institution. He tells us, that the
end

end for which the Company was incorporated, was not the advancement of learning; but something very different: viz. to protect the public from ignorant and unqualified practitioners. Thus we see, it is acknowledged by one of their own advocates, that this society was not intended for the advancement of knowledge; and, that to offer literary performances to a *Corporation*, is to *cast pearls before swine*.

This was the idea of the governors of the Corporation; who had such an insuperable aversion to all learning and improvement, that they used to bribe themselves with five shillings a head, out of the common stock of the Company, for every lecture they attended at the Hall; and probably they thought themselves but indifferently paid, for submitting to such penance.

Not so the conqueror of Italy; that hero, whose praises are resounded even by his enemies. When elected a member by the National Institute in France, he presented the following address: "The greatest of all triumphs, the only
 " conquests which occasion no regret, are those
 " made upon ignorance; and the most ho-
 " nourable, as well as the most useful employ-
 " ment for nations, is to contribute to the exten-
 " sion of human knowledge." This great man thinks learning, as well as virtue, its own re-
 ward;

ward ; and would scorn to receive five shillings, for attending a lecture of the society that has chosen him a member.

Fas est et ab hoste doceri.

That the Corporation was meant to be a *political* institution, is doubtful ; that it is not a *politic* one, is certain. It is neither calculated to be productive of any material service to the community in general, or to this city in particular. If it deserves the title of a civil institution in any sense, it is only in one of the senses assigned to it by Johnson, that it is *not* a *natural* institution.

Independent of its impolitic provisions, and the unconstitutional powers conferred on its self-elected governors, this Corporation bears intrinsic evidence of its being neither an emanation from the executive government, nor from the legislature ; but the fruits of a conspiracy against the rights of professional men, and the interests of the public. Had the Company been incorporated for the sake of protecting society from ignorant and unqualified practitioners, the act of incorporation would have contained a clause, to prevent surgeons from practising without a diploma. It is a little remarkable, that the Court of Examiners should have been fifty years in discovering,

covering, that they were not provided with proper powers to answer the end of their institution.

Mr. C. observes, " It would be a curious, and
 " very useful undertaking, to investigate the
 " principles of organization in small societies: a
 " subject certainly worthy of inquiry; but hi-
 " therto very little understood, or even confi-
 " dered." I shall therefore attempt a short essay
 on that subject; and chalk out a flight sketch, in
 hopes that Mr. C. or some other able hand, will
 complete the design.

One species of small society is called a confederacy. Its organization is extremely simple; and consists in linking two or more persons together in the bond of self-interest. This kind of small society is generally hostile to the peace and happiness of mankind. Such was the confederacy which enslaved the people of Poland; and such was the confederacy which enslaved the surgeons of London.

Another species of small society is called a gang. The former plunder by wholesale; the latter by retail. The latter as well as the former, at length become so hardened, from escaping with impunity, that they have been known to commit their depredations in the purlieus of *Newgate* and
 the

the *Old Bailey*; and even to pick pockets *under the very gallows*.

There is another species of small society, called a Corporation :

There at his banquet sits the lazy drone,
And reaps the fruits of labours not his own.

It differs in some measure from a college, which consists of working bees alone. These, if they are suffered to remain unmolested, are industrious; and endeavour to approve themselves valuable members of the community: but I would advise Mr. Chevalier not to provoke them, otherwise he may find they have *stings*.

Mr. C. observes, that “ the labours of the
“ Royal Academy of Surgery in Paris need no
“ encomium. They are before the public in
“ five quarto volumes; replete with proofs of the
“ ability of their authors.” The Counsellors of the Academy of Surgery in London have published only one small pamphlet, entitled, *The Surgeons’ Bill*. This, which may be called *multum in parvo*, is a greater curiosity than any thing contained in the whole five quarto volumes of the French Academy. It tends to exalt the authors of it above their fellows. No such extraordinary production ever issued from the council of any other learned society under the sun: I beg
their

their pardon; they seem to have been under the influence of *the moon*.

Mr. C. pays a just tribute of applause to the labours of Mr. Pott. They redound highly to his honour: but till it can be proved that the Corporation had a share in his works, it has no more a title to share in his fame, than in the fortune which he left behind him. He also bestows a high encomium on Mr. Hunter: but this is an everlasting reproach to the Court of Examiners; which, till the day of his death, never elected him one of their number.

Mr. C. takes notice, that “ in the year 1743 an
 “ edict was issued in France, dissolving the con-
 “ nexion between surgeons and barber-surgeons;
 “ *that surgery was rapidly improving in England;*
 “ *that anatomy was taught in several parts of the*
 “ *city of London by professors of considerable ability;*
 “ *that several new hospitals had been erected, and in*
 “ *all of them the education of pupils was admitted.*”
 He adds, “ The good effects of these charitable
 “ institutions were every where visible, by the
 “ striking recoveries of patients who were sent up
 “ to them from all parts of the country, in cases
 “ formerly considered as almost certainly fatal.
 “ The public mind was therefore disposed to think
 “ favourably of an art, by the perfection of which
 “ every one might look for relief, under a large

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“ and

“ and afflicting portion of the sufferings common
 “ to humanity.”

These circumstances, it seems, together with the rank the French surgeons had obtained, increased the desire of the surgeons of London to break off their connexion with the barbers. How unfortunate it is for the credit of certain gasconading gentlemen and their encomiasts, that Mr. Chevalier has not a better memory. Had he not forgotten himself, and the cause he has espoused, he would not have made the age of improvement in surgery commence two years before the separation of surgeons from barbers. He would first have given an account of the erection of Surgeons' Hall; and then have exclaimed in triumph: *Incipiant magni procedere menses!*

Previous to the period above mentioned, Mr. C. observes, “ it was almost impossible for the surgeons in England to keep pace with their brethren in France: that there were but two hospitals in London; that no pupils were allowed in one, and only nine at a time admitted in the other; that the rulers of the united Company, a majority of them being barbers, strenuously maintained the bye-law, which subjected every member who dissected a body out of their Hall without their permission,

“ fion, to a penalty of ten pounds, and rigor-
 “ oufly profecuted all who difobeyed it.” The
 removal of thefe impediments, and the abolition
 of the title of Barber-furgeons, might do much
 towards recommending the profeffion of furgery
 to men of liberal education ; and enabling them
 to make a proficiency in the fcience. But to
 what was this reform of its eftablifhment owing?
 To what, but to the gradual improvement of
 arts and fciences, in this and other countries ;
 and to the eftablifhment of anatomical fchools,
 and of hofpitals which pupils were fuffered to
 attend ?

Thus we find, that the furgeons did not dif-
 folve their connexion with the barber-furgeons,
 till the golden age of improvement had begun to
 dawn. Hence, advantage may be taken by
 fome future *knight errant*, who may fally forth to
 defend the caufe, and to vindicate the honour of
barber-furgeons. He may pretend, as other gen-
 tlemen and their *Chevaliers* have fince pretended,
 that the improvements made in their time, are
 made by their influence, and under their au-
 fpices.

Upon this occafion, I cannot help fancying
 that I fee Barber-furgeons’ Hall in an uproar,
 and hear the clerk of the Company read the fol-

H h 2 lowing

lowing resolution of the Court of Assistants :
namely, (*not, to wit*),

“ The propositions stated by the deputies have
“ been submitted to the Court of Assistants ; and
“ two of them having been represented as indif-
“ fensible, &c.

“ The Court have consequently taken these
“ propositions into their consideration, and have
“ instructed their Committee to inform the De-
“ puties, that they are unanimously of opinion,
“ that public utility, as well their duty, call
“ upon them unequivocally to declare, that, to
“ admit the proposed alterations in the act of
“ Parliament, by which the Company of Barber-
“ surgeons has been governed for upwards of
“ two hundred years, and under the influence of
“ which the public have been greatly benefited,
“ and the profession of the Barber-surgeon been
“ rapidly rising in reputation, would be *degrading*
“ *to its professors, and abandoning the service of the*
“ *public.*”

How would it have heightened this farce, if
there were any members of that Court, who ob-
jected to the admission of such as practised what
they themselves had practised ; who had as-
cended to that Court by means of an hospital, and
to that hospital by means of *temporary votes created*

at

at their own expense? How would it heighten the farce, if there were any members in that Court, who had gained their seats merely by their interest, or fortune, or connexions? How would it heighten the farce, if there were any members in that Court, who were in an *insolvent state*; and scarce able to silence the clamors of their importunate creditors?

If anatomy is now tolerated, if hospitals are increased, and pupils allowed to attend them; if able professors abound; if an ardent zeal for knowledge is kindled, and an enthusiastic spirit of inquiry gone forth; no thanks are due to those, who have held forth nothing but discouragements and exclusions, both to pupils and professors in general; and who, from a mean selfish motive, have tried to damp the ardor of that zeal, and to extinguish the spirit of that enthusiasm, in the breast of every rival candidate for fortune and for fame.

The hope of applause, and fear of disgrace, in the trying hour of examination, are powerful incentives to diligence in a generous mind; independent of any merit in those who execute the function of Examiners. If the Examiners of the Surgeons' Company have no professional character but what they have earned by the service rendered to the public in their corporate capacity, they have but little to boast.

“ Cotem-

“ Cotemporary with Mr. Pott,” says Mr. Chevalier, “ were many in England, who have “ done honour to their profession and to their “ country ; and the benefit of whose labours is “ still descending to thousands, that know little “ of the source from whence it is derived. The “ names of Sir Cæsar Hawkins and Mr. Bromfield are still in remembrance ; and will go “ down with honour to posterity.”

Infandum, Chevalere, jubes renovare dolorem !

Let any one look at the portraits drawn by Mr. Chevalier, such *was* the Court of Examiners ; let any one look at the portraits drawn by me, such *is* the Court of Examiners. It was once illustrious : *But oh ! how changed, how fallen !* When Mr. Chevalier recalls to mind the merit of former times, he only makes us lament the more the degeneracy of the present. The advocates for a scientific body must be conscious of a weak cause, and driven to a forlorn hope, when they talk of *hereditary claims* :

Et genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.

Whatever talents were possessed by the majority of the Court of Assistants, they were all exerted in support of the Surgeons' bill. Whatever influence, interest, intimidation, or importunity could

could do, was done. In point of interest, power, and patronage, the supporters of the bill were every thing: their opponents nothing. The strength of the supporters of the bill was immense: but it was not directed with equal wisdom. *Vis consilii expers mole ruit sua*. They were a brood of giants: but what is to be dreaded even from a brood of giants, when they trample on justice, and confound right and wrong, in order to gratify their ambition?

Happy would it be for the public, would they but exert a small share of their talents in medical inquiries; and not doom their patients to fall victims to their empiricism. Too many dreadful proofs of their ignorance of medicine occur, to leave a doubt of this in the mind of any practitioner of the least experience. A gentleman who was troubled with a surgical complaint, also laboured under a violent peripneumony. He had a severe cough, hot skin, flushed countenance, furred tongue, and quick and hard pulse. Instead of the antiphlogistic plan, the chief surgeon who attended him, a very eminent man, directed a generous diet, in order to promote the incarnation of the sore. He not only allowed him animal food, but advised him to drink porter, and port wine freely; and to take a dram of powder of bark three times a day. After a few days, he foretold, that his patient would die of
a de-

a decline ; and by persevering in his plan, verified his prediction.

I have heard it affirmed, that if this gentleman had diverted his attention more to medical pursuits, he would not have made so good a surgeon. I presume to think otherwise ; and to hazard an opinion, that the best surgeons, when destitute of medical knowledge, destroy more by their prescriptions, than they save by their operations. Besides, it is well known, that the necessity of most operations might be prevented by timely care and skill ; and that internal and external remedies are equally capable of contributing to that desirable end. The preservation of a patient by manual operation, is not the whole duty of a surgeon ; there is another essential part of his profession, which it behoves him to remember : *Occidit qui non servat.*

Mr. C. endeavours to justify the Court of Assistants for attempting to alter the constitution of the Company, without convening the Corporation. As well might he try to justify a steward, for attempting to alienate his lord's estate without his consent. Besides, they petitioned Parliament for a new act, in their individual, and not their corporate capacity. Add to this, having violated two acts of Parliament, they had forfeited

feited all the power and authority over the Corporation which they before possessed.

Mr. C. remarks, that hitherto the members have taken an oath, to obey the governors in all *lawful* things; but he takes care not to inform us, that by the proposed act they were to take an oath to obey them in all things, *lawful* and *unlawful*.

He maintains, that by the new act, the Court of Assistants would not acquire any additional power over the members: forgetting that they would acquire a power of taxing them without their own consent, and an absolute dominion over their property. They would likewise acquire an absolute dominion over their conscience, by an unconditional oath of obedience; and a ratification of that arbitrary and unjust bye-law, which excludes nine-tenths of the Corporation from all municipal distinctions; and operates as a disparagement on those who have given the same proofs of ability with themselves.

Mr. C. declares, that the additional power had respect to none but future settlers, between the distance of seven and ten miles round London. This is a gross misrepresentation: for it is notorious, and must have been known to one who attended the progress of the bill in the

House of Lords, that the additional power was likewise proposed to be extended over all army and navy surgeons who settle in, and within seven miles of the metropolis.

But, Mr. C. adds, indeed this could not be properly called an *additional* power; it was only an extension of the *same* power to *other* objects. According to this doctrine, the Court of Assistants would not acquire any *additional* power, if they were authorized by act of Parliament to tax all the people of Great Britain.

Mr. C. observes, that the most material objections to be considered, are those which are made against the principle of this, and the former Surgeons' bill: by this he means a principle of despotism. He tells us, that to exorcise this frightful fiend from the affairs of this extensive and increasing Corporation, various expedients have been suggested. These expedients, he tells us were imperfect. It is no disgrace to the opponents of the bill, not to have been able to propose extemporaneous remedies for all the tyrannical and oppressive clauses, and all the blunders of the Surgeons' bill. It is rather a disgrace in the authors of that bill, to impose on them so difficult a task.

He tells us, that one of the expedients proposed was, to make the officers of the Company annually elective. This, however he may disapprove of it when it suits his purpose, may be supported by arguments which he himself has advanced. He asserts, that “ publicity is always a
 “ spur to active minds : that men of talents will
 “ not devote themselves to any science, without
 “ the usual encouragements ; and that these en-
 “ couragements are rank and fortune.” It is therefore a natural inference, that the greater the probability of reward is, the greater improvements will be made in science ; and the more numerous the candidates are, in whom you excite emulation, the greater prospect is opened of advancing it to perfection.

Mr. C. informs us, that the societies of surgeons of Edinburgh and Dublin have both been incorporated as Colleges without hesitation. This proves, that the objection of Parliament was not to the title of College. In the constitution of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, the Examiners are annually elected by and from the whole College ; and yet, Mr. C. admits, they were incorporated without hesitation. Here then is a precedent, here is a model, and the only model, of a College of Surgeons, that is hitherto established in this kingdom. With such an example, I trust the Legislature will not re-

fuse to establish a similar institution in this great capital: an institution, that shall reflect equal honour on themselves, on the members of a liberal profession, and on the metropolis of the British empire.

Mr. C. remarks, that the annual election of the President and Council of the Royal Society furnished a pretext for this proposal, to the opponents of the Surgeons' bill. He might have added, that the annual election of the officers of the Antiquary Society, and the annual election of the officers of the College of Physicians, furnished a similar pretext.

He avers, that, to adopt this alteration, would produce a dependence of the most odious kind. This is so completely refuted by the experience of other societies, that it scarce deserves an answer. It would create no other dependence, but such as has always been found conducive to the welfare of every learned society. A mutual dependence of the old on the young, and of the young on the old, would stimulate both to discharge their respective duties with fidelity.

No man appears more conscious of the beneficial effects likely to result from a frequent election, than the present worthy Chamberlain of the city of London; though no man stands less in
need

need of such an admonition. His address of thanks to his fellow-citizens is so excellent an elucidation of the point in question, that I shall insert an extract from it in this place:—"No-
 " thing now remains for me, but to endeavour
 " to justify the confidence of my fellow-citizens,
 " by a faithful discharge of my various duties. *I*
 " *will never forget, gentlemen, that I am constantly*
 " *dependent on your suffrages : and it is my fervent*
 " *hope, that every anniversary of my appointment*
 " *may return with undiminished sentiments of kind-*
 " *ness on your part, as it will with increasing sensi-*
 " *bility and gratitude on mine.*"

Besides other advantages arising from this salutary custom, an opportunity is afforded of correcting a bad choice at the end of the year ; and of substituting men whose talents are still in their vigour, in the room of those who have suffered from inevitable decay. Even Nature herself, seems to point out the necessity of frequent elections ;

" Vidi lecta diu, et multo spectata labore,
 Degenerare tamen ; ni vis humana quotannis
 Maxima quæque manu legeret. Sic omnia fati
 In pejus ruere, et retro sublapsa referri.
 Non aliter, quam qui adverso vix flumine lembum
 Remigiis subigit ; si brachia forte remisit,
 Atque illum in præceps pronò rapit alveus amni."

Mr.

Mr. C. informs us, that “ the great plea for
 “ the necessity of an alteration in the constitution
 “ of the Company, is founded on the statement
 “ of their affairs drawn up by Mr. Gunning. In
 “ this he points out their mismanagements; which,
 “ as far as they respect the present subject, are
 “ reducible to three heads; *inattention to their*
 “ *minutes and accounts; neglect in the conduct of*
 “ *their lectures, and unnecessary expenses.*” He
 adds, “ Cruttenden, the clerk of the Company,
 “ who had been imprudently confided in, went
 “ off with eight or nine hundred pounds of their
 “ money. In this long, unsettled, encumbered
 “ state of things, which lasted near *forty years*, it
 “ is no wonder irregularities crept into the ma-
 “ nagement of their minutes and accounts;
 “ which at length became habitual.” Another
 fault, for which Mr. C. confesses they have no
 sufficient excuse, is, that they have not given
 any regular chirurgical lectures; though they
 have received two legacies for that purpose.

Thus, according to Mr. C.’s own account, the
 Company may well exclaim: Forty years long
 were we grieved with this generation. Not only
 the members of the Corporation were dissatisfied
 with their proceedings; but army and navy sur-
 geons; a great number of whom were intimi-
 dated by their menaces, and submitted to their
 extor-

extortions, as many an indignant sufferer is ready to testify. Others, to the amount of fifty, entered into an association, and defied their threatened prosecutions. Complaints against their mismanagement, and their illegal exactions, have been disseminated far and wide; yet those gentlemen, in their Defence, circulated among the members of the House of Peers, have the modesty to assert, and Mr. C. re-echoes their assertion, that in their conduct, not a single abuse of power has hitherto been discovered; nor one single complaint ever been made against them. Surely they have forgotten Mr. Gunning's long catalogue of complaints; recorded in their own minutes; but, alas! recorded in vain. Mr. C. owns they have been *guilty of inattention to their minutes.*

Mr. C. repeats the old pretence of their examining army and navy surgeons gratis. This has been sufficiently exploded in the preceding pages. He acknowledges that the present mode of paying the Examiners is exceptionable: and adds, that in the year 1790, a proposal was made by Mr. Gunning, the Master of the Company, to a noble Lord at that time high in office, for Government to allow a salary of four or five hundred pounds a year, to be divided between the members of the Court of Examiners, instead of fees. He then observes, that soon
after

after this, the war commenced; and it was thought an improper time to urge the matter further. This is a strange reason for not continuing to urge the request: for when was Government so likely to comply with it, as when the Court of Examiners had it in their power to render important services to the public in return? Were not the characters of those gentlemen well known to be disinterested, we might suspect, that they ceased to weary Government with their importunities in the time of wars and tumults, and adjourned the question to the halcyon days of peace, only because the war-receipts of Surgeons' Hall far exceeded a salary of *four or five hundred pounds per annum.*

Mr. C. alleges, that as far as mismanagements have been detected, the Court of Examiners have been their own accusers, by admitting the free examination of their books. This is a gross misrepresentation. In allowing an examination of their books, they only made a virtue of necessity. It was not done spontaneously; nor until a noble and learned Lord, of great and deserved influence in the House of Peers, had recommended to the opponents of the bill, in the committee-room of that House, to examine the books of the Company; adding, that if it was refused, the Lords would give them an order for that purpose. Thus it appears, there was no
self-

self accusation, or voluntary confession, on the part of the Court of Examiners, or the Court of Assistants. On the contrary, we have reason to conclude, as well from their general conduct, as from particular confession, that they did not recollect the contents of Mr. Gunning's minute; but that the minute itself, and their own misdeeds which had given it birth, were buried together in oblivion. It is probable, the parties accused, after perusing the minute which arraigned their conduct, never thought of it again: otherwise they would not have suffered such a damning proof of their flagrant dereliction of duty to remain on record, and to rise up in judgment against them, without attempting one substantial reform till now.

The *great plea*, which Mr. C. talks of, for the necessity of an alteration in the constitution of the Company, was proved by the clerk of the Company to be a *sham plea*. It was even denied by the supporters of the bill, that any alteration in the constitution of the Company was intended: and the same doctrine pervades the greatest part of Mr. C.'s own work. It was a desire of indemnification that first prompted the rulers of the Corporation to apply to Parliament: and it naturally occurred to them, that this was a favourable opportunity to gratify their ambitious views.

K k

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Whatever mad schemes they devised, the members of the Corporation at large were to be the sufferers :

Quicquid delirunt reges, plectuntur Achivi.

The opponents of the bill have not only sustained great inconvenience and loss in their professional business, from the duty imposed on them of resisting the attempted encroachments, but are obliged to bear for the present, and perhaps will ultimately bear, the greater part of the expense. And wherefore is all this expense incurred ? The great plea, it seems, is ; that the rulers of the Company, those gentlemen whose merits, Mr. C. declares, cannot possibly be greater than they are, have been inattentive to their minutes and accounts ; negligent in their lectures, and prodigal in their expenses ; and required an act of Parliament, to *compel* them to discharge their duty.

But was this a reason for attempting to rob army and navy surgeons, and levy contributions to a greater extent round London ? The same plea, *necessity*, might be advanced by other gentlemen ; when they levy contributions, and make their collections round London. But when men in power, whether in a *civil* or *uncivil* capacity, think proper to indulge their inordinate ambition, there will never be wanting some base
tool,

tool, some mean sycophant, to varnish over their crimes ;

—and with necessity,

The tyrant's plea, excuse their dev'lish deeds.

But Mr. C. acquaints us, that the whole pretence for accusation rests on their conduct of their own business ; in which the complainers had no right to intermeddle. This is a fine lesson for stewards, that proprietors have no right to intermeddle in the management of their own estates. If this is a true statement of the case, it is high time for the constitution of the Company to be altered.

When Mr. C. declares, that with regard to the conduct of the Court of Assistants towards the Company at large, not a single abuse of power has hitherto been discovered ; not one single complaint has ever been exhibited ; he must be prepared to go great lengths to serve his new friends. This assertion is the more strange in Mr. C. after his alluding to many of the complaints brought by the Company against the Court of Assistants for their conduct ; such as mismanagement of the revenues, unjust exactions, unjust exclusions from places of honour and emolument, misapplication of legacies, neglect of giving lectures, neglect of purchasing a library, neglect of calling general courts upon important

occasions; unjust alienations of the property of the Company, improvident purchases, improvident expenditure; and last, not least, an attempt to deprive them of every vestige of their remaining rights, and to rivet their chains by a new act of Parliament, obtained without their consent.

It is rather indiscreet to hazard so bold an assertion, as that, no abuse of power has been discovered in the Court of Assistants, nor one complaint exhibited against them, when it is notorious, that for a long time not only the House of Lords, but the whole kingdom, resounded with the complaints of the Corporation; and, on account of the magnitude of the grievances sustained, and the complaints made, by the Corporation, the public attention was more excited by the Surgeons' bill, than by any other private bill in the present age.

When Mr. C. calls the Corporation of Surgeons a civil institution, he seems to forget, that its concerns are regulated by private bills, originating from the Corporation. Did Government consider it as a public institution, as perhaps it ought to be, it would not leave the management of its parliamentary business in the hands of such bungling workmen.

When

When ruminating on the nature of the defence of the conduct of the Court of Assistants, set up by Mr. C. I was led into a train of reflections, which I think will serve more clearly to elucidate the point; and to enable the public to judge of the force of Mr. C.'s arguments. He says, as far as mismanagements have been detected, the Court of Examiners have been their own accusers, by admitting the examination of their books; and that the whole pretence for accusation rests on *their conduct of their own business*, in which the complainers had no right to intermeddle.

Reflecting on this kind of vindication, I could not help fancying that a nobleman's servants had a grand ball and supper below stairs; that the wardrobes of their lord and lady were stripped in order to attire the butler, housekeeper, and lady's maid; the gentlemen of the livery, the cook, and ladies of the bedchamber; the tables decorated with the choicest viands, the side-board with plate, and the glasses sparkling with burgundy and champaign. In the midst of their festivity, should the noble owners of the mansion, alarmed at the riot and noisy mirth, and high life below stairs, chance to descend, or order to discover the cause, the domestics might tell them, that the nobility have no business with their own affairs; that they have been entrusted to servants from time immemorial; that the whole pretence
for

for accusation rests on *their conduct of their own business*, in which the complainers have no right to intermeddle ; that as far as mismanagements had been detected, the defendants were their own accusers, by admitting the noisy music into the house ; and that their lord had nothing to do, but to *pay the piper*. If this should not satisfy the complainers, they might add, in the words of Mr. Chevalier, that the office they held was *a trust committed to them for civil purposes* ; and that a precedent, to justify their conduct, might be found in *Lincoln's Inn*.

Mr. C. alludes to the bye-law which excludes practitioners of pharmacy from advantageous offices ; but I cannot perceive, that he expressly mentions its excluding the practitioners of midwifery. Possibly he did not attempt to occupy that post, because he thought it untenable : but if midwifery produces nothing better than the authors of such wretched pamphlets, as those we have lately seen in defence of the Surgeons' bill, it is less beneficial to mankind than any other branch of the medical profession ; and ought to be degraded accordingly.

But although he does not directly mention midwifery, he seems to glance at it, by speaking of surgeons who do not intermeddle with inferior branches of practice. If a branch
of

of the medical profession is contemptible, because it has at times been practised by the ignorant, I fear no branch of it deserves to be held in much esteem.

Mr. C. observes, that the point to be considered is, whether there are any good reasons for confining the government of a college of surgeons, to those who are surgeons only ?

Upon this occasion, in addition to the arguments before advanced on that subject, I shall insert some observations communicated by a learned and ingenious friend.

“ The Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris was
“ founded in the year 1666.—

“ In page 2, tom. i. of the History of that
“ Academy, the editor, who, I believe, was Mr.
“ Du Hamel, gives the following account of the
“ improvements of anatomy a little anterior to
“ this time ; which improvements seem to have
“ originated rather from the discoveries of a physician (Dr. Harvey), than from the surgeons
“ themselves : and it is, I think, very probable,
“ that almost every improvement, both in surgery and anatomy, to the present hour, may
“ be traced up to this period ; or at least it is much
“ indebted to the light then thrown out. Certainly

“ tainly we cannot refer any one of them to the
 “ general merit of the Corporation of Surgeons
 “ of this kingdom, notwithstanding their extra-
 “ vagant pretensions.—

“ The editor of that work observes, that in
 “ England Baron Napier has rendered himself fa-
 “ mous by the invention of logarithms, and
 “ Harvey by the discovery, or at least incon-
 “ testable proofs, of the circulation of the blood.
 “ The honour which has accrued to the whole
 “ English nation from this new system of Harvey,
 “ seems to have attached the English to ana-
 “ tomy. Many of them have taken certain
 “ parts of the body in particular for the subject
 “ of their researches; as Wharton the glands,
 “ Glisson the liver, Willis the brain and nerves,
 “ Lower the heart and its motions, &c.—

“ On the commencement of this Academy, as
 “ soon as the chamber or company of mathema-
 “ ticians was completed, the attention of its
 “ members was turned to a company or chamber
 “ of physick. As our opponents imagine the in-
 “ terest of the public would be completely sa-
 “ crificed, by admitting any into the council
 “ who unite a knowledge of any other branch of
 “ medicine with that of surgery, let us see how
 “ M. Colbert, the then prime minister of France,
 “ acted at that time, in conformity with the ge-
 “ neral

“ neral wish of the Academy itself. The persons
 “ he nominated for the chamber of phyfic, con-
 “ sisted of two physicians, two chemists, two
 “ anatomists, and one botanist.—

“ When the mathematicians and physicians as-
 “ sembled for the first time, the first question
 “ proposed was, whether these two boards should
 “ in future be separated, or united? It was de-
 “ termined, that they should be united. ‘ Geo-
 “ metry and phyfic are in themselves united, and
 “ depend on each other for mutual assistance.’
 “ What would our *pure*, or rather our *simple*
 “ surgeons, think of even a proposal of this sort,
 “ at the present day? not only a Council uniting
 “ all the branches of the healing art; but even
 “ mathematics and geometry at the same time?”

The same gentleman has favoured me with the following remarks on Mr. C.’s calculations concerning the late Surgeons’ Hall, and the house lately purchased in Lincoln’s Inn Fields.

“ If Mr. C. were as accurate as he ought to
 “ have been, considering how much the books of
 “ the Corporation were at his service, he would
 “ find, that the expenses of the old Hall, instead
 “ of being annually, as I think he has stated
 “ them, at 240*l.* could not amount to more than

“ 213*l.*; but he does not descend to parti-
 “ culars.

“ He states, that the annual saving to the
 “ Company will be 160*l.* by the purchase of Mr.
 “ Baldwin’s house; being the difference between
 “ 80*l.* the annual amount of the mere taxes of
 “ the latter house, and the above 240*l.*: as if
 “ 80*l.* were the total annual expense of this last
 “ purchase. Who does not see, that the interest
 “ of the money with which it was purchased, is
 “ the real rent of the house itself, and ought to
 “ be notified as such?

“ He has stated, that the repairs necessary to
 “ be made in the old Hall, would have amounted
 “ to 2000*l.* Whence he acquired this knowledge,
 “ I know not: the surveyor’s report made the
 “ sum 1500*l.* He has omitted to state, that the
 “ repairs necessary to be made, even in Mr.
 “ Baldwin’s house, according to the same report,
 “ at the very time of purchase, would at least
 “ amount to 500*l.*; as he has also, that the ground-
 “ rent of the old Hall was almost reduced to a
 “ cipher, by an advantageous sale, on the part
 “ of the Company, to the Newgate committee,
 “ of a piece of ground, which used formerly to
 “ be a garden for the clerk; and for which the
 “ said committee paid the Company 900*l.* on July
 “ 6th, 1769, over and above 50*l.* an expense
 “ which

“ which the clerk pretended to have incurred in
 “ constructing his garden.

“ The 260*l.* per annum mentioned by Mr. C.
 “ accrues, I suppose, from the interest of the
 “ money, or a part of the money, sunk in con-
 “ structing the Hall, added to the annual ex-
 “ pense of taxes, &c. Certainly it cannot accrue
 “ from annual repairs, considering the state of
 “ utter ruin, into which the *prudence* of the late
 “ Court has suffered the building to fall: but the
 “ greater part of this money is equally sunk,
 “ whether the Hall be sold or repaired: and so
 “ far as relates to this matter, it will be an evil
 “ felt as fully, in one case as in the other. The
 “ Company, however, have had the use of this
 “ money, and have enjoyed its utmost value;
 “ for they have enjoyed the use of the building
 “ which was erected by its expenditure, till that
 “ building was completely worn out, and the
 “ mere ruinous materials remain. No part of
 “ this money ought, therefore, to be taken into
 “ consideration, in the valuation of *present* annual
 “ expense, excepting what it was probable would
 “ be recovered by a sale of the wreck itself.

“ The only fair question, then, that can be
 “ proposed is the following:

“ What is the difference of annual expense
 “ incidental to the Company, between a reten-
 “ tion of the old Hall, and the purchase of Mr.
 “ Baldwin’s house, calculating both at the time
 “ of the aforesaid sale and purchase? both edi-
 “ fices having formerly been worth considerably
 “ more.

“ To determine this, take the following
 “ tables :

“ Value of the old Hall, as estimated from the price “ given, 2100 <i>l</i> . Annual interest of this sum which has “ now been realized, part being a bond, and part in “ the funds, about	£ 108
“ Annual ground-rent to the city	60
“ Annual taxes	45
“ Total annual expense of the old Hall at the time of “ sale	213
“ Value of Mr. Baldwin’s house, estimated as above, “ from the price given by the late Court, being 11,000 <i>l</i> . “ in the 3 per cents. Annual interest	340
“ Annual taxes	80
“ Total annual expense of Mr. Baldwin’s house	420
“ Former annual expenditure	213
“ Annual surplus of expense to the Company, produced “ by the new purchase	207
“ It	

“ It is said, however, that 2000*l.* was stated
 “ by the surveyor as a sum necessary to be sunk
 “ in repairs of the old Hall. This, as before ob-
 “ served, is also an exaggeration; his report
 “ having been 1500*l.* Compare this expense
 “ with the same surveyor’s report of monies ne-
 “ cessary to be sunk in repairs, and other mat-
 “ ters consequent on the purchase of Mr. Bald-
 “ win’s house.

“ Repairs of the old Hall	£1,500
“ Repairs of Mr. Baldwin’s house	£500
“ Building a library in the house, and a theatre “ in the Old Bailey, as noticed by Mr. C.	800—1,300
“ Surplus of expense in repairing the old Hall	200

“ So that, after all that has been said, the old
 “ Hall, when fully repaired, would have cost
 “ only 200*l.* more than must be expended in re-
 “ pairs and offices, in consequence of the late
 “ purchase, if it be retained; even according to
 “ the estimate of the Court itself. To save this
 “ 200*l.* to the Company, the officers of the late
 “ Court have consented to part with a sum out of
 “ the Company’s property, yielding the yearly
 “ interest of 213*l.* and this for a perpetuity!!
 “ and yet here is a young man sent forwards by
 “ themselves into the world, to trumpet forth
 “ their unrivalled sagacity in this transfer of
 “ buildings;

“ buildings ; and the vast gain they have hereby
 “ added to the Company’s treasury !!!

“ But they have at least acquired, we are told,
 “ by their conduct, a freehold estate for a lease-
 “ hold ; which at once counterbalances every
 “ possible disadvantage ; and proves the late pur-
 “ chase to have been a far better bargain than
 “ the former. Yet even to this proposition I
 “ can by no means assent ; and for very ob-
 “ vious reasons. I have already stated, that by
 “ a fortunate sale of a part of the ground belong-
 “ ing to the old Hall to the Newgate committee,
 “ the Company acquired the nett sum of 900*l*.
 “ so long ago as July 6th, 1769. What the
 “ Court have actually done with this sum, I
 “ cannot exactly tell : but what they ought to
 “ have done with it, I have no hesitation in de-
 “ termining : and that is, they should immedi-
 “ ately have converted the whole of it, both
 “ principal and interest, into a sinking fund ;
 “ with a view of defraying the expense of erect-
 “ ing the Hall itself, as also of being provided
 “ with an adequate resource, against any very
 “ heavy repairs that might occasionally demand
 “ their attention, or even the purchase of a free-
 “ hold estate, upon the actual termination of
 “ the lease, if at that time found advisable.
 “ Had this rational plan been pursued, when,
 “ nearly thirty years since, the above sum of
 “ 900*l*.

“ 900*l.* was added to the Company’s treasure,
 “ they would even now have had nearly double
 “ the sum in their hands, which the ruinous
 “ state of the old Hall required, at the time of
 “ its sale, to have put it into complete repair:
 “ and had it not been suffered to run to such a
 “ state of ruin, and the repairs been from time
 “ to time duly attended to, had they retained
 “ this building in their own hands, and still suf-
 “ fered the above sinking fund to have accu-
 “ mulated, the Company, on the termination of
 “ the present lease, of which about fifty-four
 “ years remain unexpired, from the above 900*l.*
 “ alone, would have been in possession of a fund
 “ issuing from the very lease itself, equal to
 “ twice the purchase of the fee simple either of
 “ the old Hall, or of Mr. Baldwin’s house: the
 “ accumulating capital, even allowing occasional
 “ drafts upon it for necessary repairs, at that time
 “ being at least worth 11,000*l.* sterling.

“ Before then I could consent, that the latter
 “ purchase, although that of a freehold, and al-
 “ lowing it had been acquired at a much more
 “ reasonable sum, is a better bargain than the
 “ lease of the ground for the old Hall, I must be
 “ told, that there is a prospect of benefiting the
 “ Company by the sum of at least 900*l.* by the
 “ sale of some part of the freehold itself. But in-
 “ stead of this, instead of the Company’s ac-
 “ quiring

“ quiring 900*l.* after all the expenſe they have
 “ incurred by the purchaſe, we are told that the
 “ ſum of 1300*l.* more remains yet to be ſpent
 “ upon the eſtate, to make it fit for uſe.”

Mr. C. obſerves, that the great objection to the propoſed conſtitution is the power of making bye-laws. Certainly it is conſidered in that light; eſpecially when the perſons veſted with that power are not choſen, nor approved of, by the members of the Corporation at large.

This power he thinks not likely to be abuſed, becauſe no bye-law can be valid, without the ſanction of ſome of the great law officers. “ Hence,” he ſays, “ no wanton, or illegal inconvenience, can ever be laid upon the members at large.” That an injury has been committed on the Corporation at large is certain; it is alſo notorious, that it was committed under colour of law. If the law really conferred on them this oppreſſive power, all we can ſay to their tyrannical exerciſe of it is, *ſummum juſ eſt ſumma injuria.*

The power of the Court of Aſſiſtants to make bye-laws, Mr. C. ſays, is a *civil* truſt. If ſo, they have exerciſed it rather in an *uncivil* manner. He tells us, it has only theſe objects in view; the qualifications of practitioners, “ the

“ support of the dignity and privileges of the
 “ profession, and the management of receipts
 “ and expenses belonging to the institution.”
 That the Court of Assistants have grossly neglected their duty in all these respects, is manifest from the proofs adduced against them by their opponents, and even from the confessions of their own defenders.

“ Beyond these,” says Mr. C. “ and what *relates* to these, they can have no power; and
 “ whatever is directed to these, must be, upon
 “ the whole, advantageous to the members at
 “ large; and cannot admit of any substantial
 “ grievance, which will not speedily correct it-
 “ self.” Under the head of receipts and expenditure, Mr. C. artfully conceals the power of *taxation*. This is a masked battery, intended to be played off as occasion may require. Mr. C.’s idea of receipts and expenditure may be well explained by a sponge. That which was used by the Court of Assistants had a great absorbent power; but they knew how to squeeze it out. They squeezed it most unmercifully, which was a substantial grievance; but as inanition increased the absorbent power of the sponge, as it drank with most avidity when it was most dry, it was a grievance *which speedily corrected itself*.

Not so the power of admitting unqualified practitioners. The more they tasted the sweets of that office, the less were they able to refuse the perquisites. Not only *poverty*, which has often found a way into that Court, but even *wealth*, is unable to resist the fascinating charms of *lucre* :

Crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit.

In short, I appeal to the defences published in favour of the Surgeons' bill for proofs, that the grossest abuses have prevailed in the Corporation ; and although the indigence of the Company has a tendency to correct itself, it is only by the help of extortion.

Mr. C. observes, that as the *oversight* of these objects must be entrusted somewhere, Government ought to entrust it to persons of *tried* ability. Perhaps, instead of *Government*, he ought to have said, *the Legislature*. The ability of the late managers of the Corporation has indeed been *tried*, and *found wanting*. It is for Mr. C. to say, whether he would wish the *superintendence* of those duties to be secured in a succession of such persons: we all know, they are well enough qualified for the *oversight* of their duties ; for they have *overlooked* them in a strange manner.

Mr. C. justly remarks, that the power of election is of the utmost importance; but argues ill when he maintains it ought to be confined to a few. He thinks twenty-one persons fully competent to transact the business of the Company; and that where it can be safely transacted by a few, it is improper to commit it to more. Whatever we may think of the competency of twenty-one to manage the affairs of the Corporation, we agree with him, from past experience, that *there is no peculiar charm in that number.*

Mr. C. takes notice, that the reciprocal influence of personal and official dignity, is one of those subjects, on which *the new light* has not yet condescended to shine. I beg therefore he will inform us, whether there is more official dignity in an extortioner, or personal dignity in an insolvent? for neither of those characters is new in that Court. *Their reciprocal influence must be great.*

Mr. C. alludes to the bye-law which excludes practitioners of pharmacy; and is of opinion, that although it has been the subject of many severe animadversions, "the circumstances must be very rare, that will make a departure from this rule admissible." It must be acknowledged, that, owing to the want of encouragement, or rather to the discouragement, held out

to them by the Court of Assistants, the majority of the members of the Corporation, who are practitioners of pharmacy, have not cultivated their surgical talents as they could have done: but for this their oppressors, who ought to be their protectors, are to blame.

But Mr. C. tells us, that if circumstances should occur, that make it necessary to depart from this rule, those who make the bye-law will have full power to make the exception. This is a very convenient bye-law: it may be broken at pleasure. It is a draw-bridge, which will serve to keep out rivals: but it will accommodate itself, to let in a friend upon occasion.

Mr. C.'s confession is rather unfortunate for his patrons. It proves that the bye-law was not intended to keep out *unqualified* persons; for such they need not elect; but to raise a prejudice against those members of the Corporation, who, from a more general knowledge of the medical profession, had superior claims to the confidence of the public.

What but jealousy has caused all the surgeons of dispensaries to be proscribed? It is no difficult matter to prove, that in *curative* surgery, many surgeons of dispensaries, as well as private surgeons, are no less successful than those who be-
long

long to hospitals : and in operative surgery, perhaps not less expert. Such mean jealousies, and selfish monopolies, in professional men, are no less injurious to the public, than disgraceful to themselves.

To the great names, with which this work is interspersed, of surgeons blending other branches of the medical profession with their own, may be added all army and navy surgeons, and forty-nine out of fifty of those who are settled throughout the British dominions : men, who, by their skill in the medical as well as the surgical department, and by greater attention to their patients than what is met with in hospitals, prevent the frequent necessity of operations ; but many of whom are capable of performing them, when necessary, in a manner that does them no discredit. In Scotland, pharmacy is practised by surgeons in general.

As the defenders of the Surgeons' bill agree in bestowing high encomiums on the Academy of Surgery in Paris, I shall extract a few observations from the preface to their Memoirs, in order to correct some erroneous ideas entertained by the friends of the bill. My readers will excuse my giving these quotations an English dress, though less elegant than the original.

“ If

“ If surgery is so difficult to be acquired,
 “ would it not be entertaining an unjust idea of
 “ it, to reduce it to the art of operating? This
 “ art is undoubtedly an essential part of it; it is
 “ the operation which principally characterises
 “ the surgeon: but the art of operating, confi-
 “ dered abstractedly, depends merely on anato-
 “ mical knowledge, and dexterity of the hand.
 “ Practice gives this dexterity; but it gives not
 “ the genius and the lights which ought to di-
 “ rect it.”

“ Hence, they who estimate the value of
 “ surgery by operations alone, they who believe
 “ that it is nothing but a long habit of operating
 “ that forms a great surgeon, labour under a very
 “ gross mistake. In order to judge the better in
 “ this respect, let us examine operations as they
 “ are in themselves: they may be reduced, either
 “ into operations which are described, or into
 “ those operations which vary according to the
 “ parts on which they are performed, and ac-
 “ cording to the difference of the disease.

“ The place of those operations which are de-
 “ scribed is always fixed, the line is traced, the
 “ course of the operator is governed by rules.
 “ Can the habit which guides the surgeon in this
 “ line, where all the steps he is to take are
 “ marked out, and from which he cannot de-
 “ viate

“ viate if he has any memory or eyes, can this
 “ habit be a decisive proof of capacity and
 “ talents ?

“ Those surgeons who rest all their merit on
 “ this foundation, degrade themselves, and dis-
 “ parage their profession. The knowledge which
 “ is so necessary in such cases to direct the hand,
 “ does not comprehend all that is requisite to
 “ form a surgeon. The operations which are
 “ regulated thereby, although they generally
 “ strike the vulgar, are but one point in the cure
 “ of diseases. A knowledge of the cases which
 “ require them, of the accidents that ensue, and
 “ the treatment which ought to vary according
 “ to the nature and the diversity of those ac-
 “ cidents, are not all these essential objects of
 “ surgery ?

“ The profound knowledge which constitutes
 “ the basis of surgery, constitutes the merit and
 “ the difficulty of that art : it shows us, at the
 “ same time, from what hands we may expect
 “ its advancement. Great surgeons are as rare
 “ as genius, learning, and talents : genius is the
 “ source of light, it is the universal instrument ;
 “ but it is, if we may be allowed the expression,
 “ like the body : it becomes torpid from inac-
 “ tion. A mind that is uncultivated is as inca-
 “ pable of distinguishing objects, of seeing their
 “ affinities,

“affinities, and of pursuing a regular chain of
 “reasoning, as the body is of agility and flexi-
 “bility without previous exercise. It is there-
 “fore necessary, that the understanding should
 “be prepared for its initiation in surgery, as well
 “as for its initiation in other sciences: that is to
 “say, it should be furnished, in the study of this
 “art, with that knowledge which unfolds to us
 “the operations of nature. Without this know-
 “ledge, it is impossible to penetrate to those
 “truths, which form the rules, by which we
 “ought to conduct ourselves in the cure of
 “diseases.”

Our authors next inform us, that the progres-
 sive improvements made in surgery, are owing en-
 tirely to such as were guided by this knowledge.
 After mentioning the names of some of the most
 eminent, they add, “*Many of these great men*
 “*joined the title of physician to that of surgeon;*
 “*because in foreign universities physic has not been*
 “*separated from surgery, as in the University of*
 “*Paris.*”

Here is a tacit acknowledgment of the mem-
 bers of the Royal Academy, of the impolicy of
 their University, which refused to admit students
 into the faculty of medicine, unless they abjured
 surgery. Let surgeons of the eighteenth cen-
 tury, who wish to imitate such illiberal conduct,
 blush :

blush: let them see, by the confession even of *surgeons*, whom they are in the habit of extolling, that surgery is indebted for the progress it has made, to our illustrious countryman Harvey, and other practitioners of medicine; and discern the impolicy of excluding from the government of the Corporation those who blend any other branch of the healing art with their own.

Mr. C. affirms, that surgery has flourished under the late regulation. In like manner, Christianity flourished under Julian the apostate. He does not even pretend, that the governors of the Corporation have done any thing for the improvement of the science, except in their individual capacity. The only seminaries for the education of surgeons, are private anatomical theatres; and hospitals, in which the Corporation has no concern, and over which it has no control.

He tells us, that the members of the Court of Assistants have asked for higher rank, because it has already been bestowed on their brethren in Scotland and Ireland; whose merits, great as they may be, cannot be superior to their own. It is rather unfortunate, that Mr. C. has brought such a body of evidence against his patrons, as must invalidate all his testimony in their favour.

Upon the whole, I cannot but declare, that Mr. C. appears to be the cat's-paw in this work. He publishes again, in a confused and contradictory manner, those allegations of the petitioners for the Surgeons' bill, which have already been so completely refuted. It is, however, a little strange he should aver, that the merits of the managers of the Corporation are such as cannot be exceeded, after allowing, that they have been negligent in their accounts, lavish in their expenditure; and that they had omitted to give lectures for the improvement of the science, although two legacies were left for that express purpose. He does not inform us, *that they omitted to receive the legacies.*

He tells us, they have asked for an addition of three miles to their jurisdiction, *for the public good and safety only.* He adds, that as the means of instruction are now so much easier of access, it is doubly disgraceful that practitioners should be suffered, who are destitute of proper information. But, as the means of instruction are so easy of access, why should not every surgeon be compelled to undergo the same examination; especially as the only objects with the Court of Assistants are the public good and safety? From their disinterested spirit, it may be presumed, that, for the public good and safety, they would have no objection to examine every surgeon in
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the kingdom, provided they receive half a guinea each for his diploma.

He tells us, that the present state of their funds will permit them to exonerate their members from the further payment of quarterage. If such is the state of the funds, after their late profuse expenditure, the quarterage must long have been an imposition.

He tells us, " they will be enabled to set on foot an establishment for chirurgical instruction; greatly needed, and loudly called for by every principle of policy and national justice." Here is a frank confession, that the purpose for which the legacies were bequeathed to the Corporation was laudable, and the institution of lectures necessary; nay, that it was loudly called for by every principle of policy and national justice. Yet we are told, that the managers of the Corporation, whose merits cannot be surpassed, have long been in possession of endowments and funds destined for that purpose; which they refused to apply to their proper use. Having no confidence in their own intentions, they wish to bind themselves to the performance of their duty, by an act of Parliament.

Since I began writing these remarks, I have conversed with several gentlemen who were

present at the meetings at the Crown and Anchor, who assure me, that Mr. C. was at first one of the most strenuous opposers of the Surgeons' bill; and that he was one of those who assisted in drawing up the petition to the House of Lords; and signed that petition. He was also one of those, who paid the first subscription towards defraying the expense. At the second meeting, he read a paper, containing reasons for changing his opinion of the bill. These reasons were derived from *official authority*; but, as Mr. C. observes, they produced little impression on the company.

If the objections to the bill were of no force, as Mr. C. affirms, it is rather surprising he became a proselyte to them. It is no compliment to the House of Lords to assert, that the bill was thrown out by that House in consequence of objections which were of no force; especially a bill which had three times received the sanction of the House of Commons, and passed twice through the House of Lords, and thrice through a committee of that House. Objections of no force could never induce such a grave assembly, consisting of senators educated in the science of legislation, and of the brightest luminaries of the law, to acknowledge their errors, and rescind their resolutions.

They

They who saw how closely Mr. C. stuck on his new friends, after his apostacy, and who have read his panegyrical performance, may fancy they see a fish of the parasitical kind, who, conscious of his own weakness, clings to a fish of a larger species, from instinct: yet is so far from conferring any benefit on the animal to which it is attached, that it only encumbers him with a dead weight. He loads his new friends with undeserved praise; which is sharper than the severest satire. He hugs them like a bear; and kills them with his kindness. The fate of the Court of Assistants is singularly hard: their pretended friends prove their bitterest enemies. He makes the third *Irish* defender; who has undertaken their cause, and left it *the worse for his defence*.

He seems confident, that after perusing his book, written by a surgeon and apothecary, the Legislature will be convinced, that a surgeon and apothecary is more ignorant than a simple surgeon,—that those who understand two or three branches of a profession are more ignorant than those who understand but one, and consequently, that the Surgeons' bill ought to pass, and will pass.

He supposes there are gentlemen, who fancy that the bill bears some resemblance to the arbitrary

trary systems of government in different parts of Europe, which have lately been blown up with revolutionary gunpowder. Hence he labours the more assiduously to support the Court of Assistants; and concludes, that now when *he* has risen to assert their cause, the bill will pass.

Should that great event, the devout wish and ardent prayer of the self-elected rulers of the Corporation, take place, Mr. Chevalier ought, as a reward for his services, to be stationed before the gate of the house lately dedicated to Æsculapius in Lincoln's Inn Fields. There he may stand, *like Janus with his double face*; and guard the temple.

Should that renowned bill, that precious monument of despotism, the devout wish and ardent prayer of every self-elected ruler of the Corporation, be preserved from the ravages of revolutionary gunpowder, which Mr. Chevalier so much dreads, another instance will stand on record to prove, that small causes may sometimes occasion great events. *Rome was saved by the cackling of a goose.*

When Mr. C. espoused the cause of the Court of Assistants, and asserted their claim to an act of Parliament conferring collegiate honours, he little expected they would so soon abandon that claim.

claim. He little expected, they would so soon despair of procuring an act, on the principles of the late bill. Of this, the confident manner in which he speaks of the probability of their success in the present session, is a sufficient testimony.

He had little reason to apprehend, that they would so suddenly renounce the proud object of their ambition, that of rivalling the College of Physicians in rank and dignity ; and be content with soliciting a patent for their practice, like so many quacks ; putting themselves on a footing with a brother-member of the Corporation, the proprietor of Leake's pills.

They who know, that the Court of Assistants have been trying in vain to appease that great man, who, in the last session of Parliament, vanquished them with his breath, are not at a loss to account for their having resolved on this humiliating and degrading measure. The recollection of their discomfiture in the House of Lords, terrified their imaginations :

—— for such another field

They dreaded worse than hell : so much the fear
Of Thurlow's thunder, and the voice of Thurlow,
Wrought still within them.

When

When Mr. C. called the victorious opponents of the bill panic-stricken gentlemen, he little suspected his own clients would again be panic-stricken quite so soon. He and his friends had formed but a faint idea of the inflexible integrity, and unshaken resolution, of that great man, who had once before disappointed their ambition.

Justum et tenacem propositi virum;
Non civium ardor prava jubentium
Mente quatit solidâ.

What mortification must Mr. C. have felt, when, after his confident assurance of success in *Parliament*, he condescended once more to act as the humble emissary of the supporters of the bill; and, at a general meeting of the members of the Corporation, recommended a concurrence and co-operation with the Court of Assistants in their endeavours to obtain a *patent*! This proposal, a great majority of those who were present, spurned with indignation.

It has been rumoured, that the noble and learned Lord allowed, the friends of the bill might obtain a patent. This, if true, was no great compliment: it is no more than might be said of all the quacks in the kingdom. Certain it is, he denounced the wrath of Parliament against any future Surgeons' bill, founded on the principles of the last. Certain it is, they have
not

not yet forgotten the force of his eloquence, nor recovered from the shock of his resentment.

—So much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms?

The frequent and submissive embassies of the Court of Assistants to him, who has hitherto frustrated all their designs, and blasted all their hopes, prove that their pride is humbled; that they sue for grace, and tremble at his displeasure. The renunciation of all hopes of parliamentary sanction to their ambitious projects, and their present humble attempts, prove that their embassies were unsuccessful.

Had Mr. C. been a member of one of those embassies, he would have beheld a manly character: not a reed shaken by the wind; but an example of constancy, and an emblem of the British oak.

*Ille, velut rupes vastum quæ prodit in æquor,
Obvia ventorum furiis, expositaque ponto,
Vim cunctam atque minas perfert cœlique marisque;
Ipse immota manet.*

The members of the Corporation at large would be wanting in gratitude, did they not also pay the just tribute of applause to many other

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distinguished persons of rank and talents; who honoured their cause with support. By their indefatigable exertions, and their disinterested zeal, they have deserved well of the members of a liberal profession; and are entitled to be ranked among the benefactors of mankind.

Amidst all the calamities and misfortunes of the present hour, from whatever source they spring, I trust we are not fallen on such evil days, but that we have still senators, who deem other objects besides war and finance worth their care. We have still senators, who, by their unwearied attention to other duties, have evinced a due regard to the health and happiness of the people :

Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.

If the fortunate opponents of the late Surgeons' bill are not wanting to themselves, I trust, they will never want the same countenance and protection which they have already experienced. A steady perseverance in the line they have hitherto pursued, cannot fail to crown their efforts with final success; by securing an act, calculated at once to protect the rights of individuals, and promote the cause of science; an act, founded on the broad basis of universal justice, and the public good.

THE following circular letter, from the Committee chosen by the general meeting of the members of the Corporation, will show the present state of affairs.

"SURGEONS" COMMITTEE.

" London Coffee-house, Ludgate-street,

"SIR, March 3d, 1798.

“ THE Committee nominated by the last general assembly of the members of the late Corporation of Surgeons held at this place, for the purpose of preparing a bill of incorporation, have been surpris'd at the circulation of a letter from Mr. Oakey Belfour, their late clerk, signifying, that the persons still assuming the title of Court of Assistants, had judg'd it right to petition the Crown for a charter; and attempting to justify their illegal sale of Surgeons' Hall, &c. and the injudicious purchase they have made. The Committee deem it their duty to express their entire disapprobation of this conduct. It appears upon this, as upon all former occasions, the Court of Assistants, without deigning to consult the members at large, have predetermined what is to be done; leaving them no other power than that of affixing their names to a petition; and it seems that they have already resolv'd to apply for the charter, however few the signatures they may be able to procure. This innovation of a charter is contrary to the ancient practice.

“ It is now two centuries and an half since the surgeons of London were first incorporated by acts of Parliament, which was done with the manifest approbation of the whole kingdom. It was evidently agreeable to the present Parliament, that the Corporation of Surgeons should continue to be united by their authority ; for the House of Commons passed a late bill for that purpose, and the House of Lords passed it likewise on the two first readings ; it was rejected on the third, not because their Lordships were averse to the surgeons being incorporated by an act of Parliament, but on account of certain unjust and oppressive clauses which had been introduced into the bill. It is likewise clear, that the whole body of surgeons (without exception), from the days of Henry the Eighth to the present time, have preferred being incorporated by an act of Parliament.

“ This was the uniform opinion of those who petitioned against the late bill ; and surely it was that of those who petitioned for it, or why did they petition at all ? It must particularly have been the opinion of the late Court of Assistants, who caused the bill to be presented. They can only have altered their opinion now, in consequence of finding it impossible to deceive the watchful eye of Parliament, by obtaining clauses injurious

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to the public, and to the rights of the members of the late Corporation.

“ For these, and other reasons which might be urged, it is requested, that no member of the late Corporation will sign the petition for the charter; which is intended to subvert their ancient laws and government; or that they will at least wait till the Committee lay before them a draft for the intended bill, which will be ready in a few days.

“ It will then be found, that the Committee have adopted such clauses as have a tendency to public utility, as well as the honour of the members; that they have amended such parts of the late bill as gave just offence to the majority of the late Corporation, and that they have expunged such others as met with the reprehension of the Lords of Parliament.

“ Your Committee likewise think it their duty to inform you, they are well assured, that there exists at this instant a want of unanimity among the members of the late Court of Assistants, on the propriety of applying for the proposed charter; the principles of which are precisely similar to those of the bill so lately rejected by the House of Lords.

“ By order of the Committee,

“ J. SIMPSON.”

From

From the notification circulated by Mr. Bel-four it appears, that the members of the Court of Assistants do not think proper to prefer their petition for a restoration of the powers of the Corporation, in Parliament, where they are too well known.

It must afford great pleasure to the members of the late Corporation, to hear from the Court of Assistants, that the public good has been the sole guide of their conduct: especially as it was a kind of information not likely to come from any other quarter.

They tell us, that in their sale and purchase, they were actuated by motives of sound policy; and that it is not doubted, but the prudence of that measure will be apparent to every member, who will inquire into the particulars of the transaction. Having taken no small pains to probe that affair to the bottom, I have laid the result before my readers in the preceding pages. Those who will take the trouble to peruse the account there given, will know what the members of the Court of Assistants mean by *prudence* and *policy*.

The same gentlemen inform us, that the number of the members of the Corporation has prodigiously increased: and well may the number increase, when, for the sake of sordid lucre, they
have,

have, as one of their own advocates confesses, overwhelmed the whole empire with despicable pretenders.

At the late general meeting of the members of the Corporation, (whose powers are now dormant), seventeen persons were selected to form a Committee; who were authorized to prepare a bill for a renewal of the late act of incorporation, with the rank and title of a Royal College; and such additional powers and regulations, as the present improved state of surgery demands. Four of the gentlemen who were nominated for that Committee, not satisfied with declining the office, published an advertisement, intended to prove subservient to the cause of the Court of Assistants. It is necessary, therefore, to state, that those gentlemen practise only surgery; and have an evident interest in the success of the cause which they support. They have a good foundation for affirming, that the constitution of the Company was attended with evident *advantage to their profession*; at least to *themselves*.

It is no wonder, the party whose measures were in avowed opposition to the late infamous bill, should incur the displeasure of the party that were its avowed supporters: but it is unjust, to charge them with an intention of overthrowing the constitution of the Company; since it is well known,

known, and acknowledged by all those belonging to either party, who are in the least degree conversant with the subject, that the constitution of the Company is *already overthrown*.

As a proof of this, the Committees of both sides now address themselves to the members of the *late* Corporation of Surgeons. Both parties profess an intention of resuscitating the dormant powers of the Corporation; one—by patent, the other—by act of Parliament. Whichever party may succeed, and under whatever title the Corporation may be revived, I hope it will rise again, like the Phoenix, more beautiful and more glorious from its own ashes; and, like Antæus, derive new vigour from every fall.

In the mean time, it may not be amiss to inform those gentlemen, who decline the office proposed for their acceptance at the general meeting, that when the majority of the meeting acquiesced in the nomination of hostile members, it was for the sake of conciliating dissensions which have too long prevailed; not from a fear of encountering those adversaries in a state of discomfiture, whom they conquered when in all their glory.

FINIS.

