

of all members who have watched carefully the work done already by the Union.

With regard to the proposed changes in the election of the Council, or, as I prefer to call them, the directors, we are merely following out the lines and principles of most companies. To run the risk of losing by a "clique" vote at the annual meeting the valued services of directors who have done good work, who have supported the policy I have stated above, would be disastrous to the working of such a company as ours.

No company would care to lose the services of its chairman if the chairman had done such loyal and true suit and service for it as Mr. Lawson Tait.

The work of the directors cannot be learnt in a hurry, and to hand over the duties to an entirely new directorate would end in speedy disaster. No change has been suggested which has not been considered by the executive to be of benefit to the Union, and surely those who have worked the Union from its degradation to its present triumphant position are the best judges of what it requires to keep it in the latter condition.

I can assure Dr. Hugh Woods that he need not fear that the new articles will have any revolutionary effect. We have only one aim—the perfection of the lines of defence to resist attack from outside. New recruits are daily gathering round us adding increased strength, and I shall be surprised if the annual report of this year's heavy work does not double the number of our members. Our motto ought to be "Defence not Defiance."—I am, etc.,

Longridge Road, S.W.

A. G. BATEMAN, M.B.

SIR,—There are many objections to the proposed alteration of the articles of association of the Medical Defence Union, and I would therefore venture to point out to those members of the Union who, like myself, will not be able to attend the meeting at Birmingham on January 7th that they have the power, under the existing rules, of voting by proxy provided they forward the following form to the office of the Union not less than forty-eight hours before the time of holding the said meeting. As the subscription falls due on January 1st, and as no one is entitled to vote who has not paid all dues, it will be advisable to enclose cheque for the subscription with the proxy form, so as to avoid any possibility of invalidating the vote. I have no doubt Dr. Hugh Woods (Archway Road, Highgate, N.) would willingly act as proxy for any members who may wish to record their vote against the proposed re-constitution of the Union.—I am, etc.,

FRANCIS W. CLARK, M.R.C.S., D.P.H.Camb.,  
Newcastle-on-Tyne. A Member of the Union.

PROXY FORM.

"The Medical Defence Union" Limited by Guarantee.  
I, —, of — in the County of —, being a member of the Medical Defence Union Limited by Guarantee, hereby appoint — of —, as my proxy to vote for me and on my behalf at the special general meeting of the company to be held on the 7th day of January, 1892, and at any adjournment thereof.

As witness my hand this — day of —,  
Signed by the said —, in the presence of —.

THE TITLE OF "DOCTOR."

SIR,—I sincerely regret that I have to again introduce this subject. When a conqueror takes possession of a country he generally tries to set two portions of its population at loggerheads. In the same way, this question of the title of "doctor" has been the cause of the bitterest wrangling among practitioners. I go so far as to state that no practitioner has any right whatever to use the title "doctor." I have last week received a reply from the Windsor Herald, College of Arms, London, "that a doctor of medicine, a physician, or a surgeon have no precedence as such at Court." If a practitioner were a baronet or knight he would take his place as such among these. This question of title is only of use in Court affairs, but so-called "title" is not such. It is only a description of our occupation. It is like John Jones, greengrocer. It will be noticed in the *London Gazette* that when the present Privy Council representative for Ireland to the Medical Council was appointed he, although an M.D., F.R.C.P., was described as Mr. Moore, M.D. If a man has an M.D. let him say so, but such gives him no right to the title of doctor. In other words, the title is not patented, and so any person whatsoever has a perfect right to baptise his son "doctor" so-and-

so. If he used the title of Knight or Sir So-and-so, it would be different.

Taking the above facts into consideration, I would recommend every practitioner to adopt the title of "Mr." If every one did so, the disuse would not be noticed by the public. Further, each one should state that he is a registered medical practitioner (R.M.P.) This is the pith of the entire question, for the Medical Act of 1858—which founded our *Medical Register*—starts with the following:—"Whereas it is expedient that persons requiring medical aid should be enabled to distinguish qualified from unqualified practitioners." Now there are about 88 medical diplomas, etc., granted by the 21 universities and corporations in the United Kingdom. When these letters are used, how can the average mechanic tell which is genuine? Take the Scotch triple qualification—L.R.C.P.E., L.R.C.P.E., L.F.P.&S.G. What can the average mortal make out of this? The following table shows the diplomas granted, how the public is befogged, and how we help them "to distinguish between qualified and unqualified":—

Body granting.	Titles.	No.
London University	M.B., B.S., M.S., M.D., P.H.D.	5
Oxford	M.B., M.D., B.C., M.C., P.H.D.	5
Cambridge	M.B., M.D., B.C., M.C., P.H.D.	5
Durham	M.B., M.D., B.S., M.S., L.M., L.S., P.H.D.	7
Victoria	M.B., M.D., B.Ch., M.Ch., P.H.D.	5
Dublin	M.B., M.D., B.S., M.S., B.A.O., M.A.O., D.M., D.S., D.O., P.H.D.	10
Royal	M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., M.D., M.Ch., M.A.O., P.H.D.	7
Aberdeen	M.B., M.D., M.C., P.H.D.	4
Edinburgh	M.B., M.D., M.C., P.H.D.	4
Glasgow	M.B., M.D., M.C., P.H.D.	4
St. Andrews	M.B., M.D., M.C.	3
R.C.P.Lond.	Fellow, Memb., Licent., Extra Licent.	4
R.C.S.Eng.	Fellow, Memb., Lic. in Med., P.H.D.	4
R.C.P.I.	Fellow, Memb., Lic., Lic. in Med., P.H.D.	5
R.C.S.I.	Fellow, Lic., Lic. Med., P.H.D.	4
R.C.P.Ed.	Fellow, Memb., Lic., P.H.D.	4
R.C.S.Ed.	Fellow, Licent., P.H.D.	3
F.P.&S.G.	Fellow, Licent., P.H.D.	1
Apoth. Hall, Lond.	...	1
Apoth. Hall, Dub.	...	1
Total medical diplomas, degrees, etc.	...	88

To make confusion worse confounded, there were 26 foreign university M.D.'s registrable, including 8 American universities, thus giving 114 diplomas. In these are not included dental diplomas. The total sum, exclusive of class fees, made through sales of the above 88 diplomas cannot have been under £34,000 per annum. The Public Health Society has petitioned the General Medical Council to bring about some uniformity in the titles of Public Health diplomas. Could we not follow this example? Or could the examining bodies not agree among themselves to grant one uniform title to registration, allowing each practitioner, if he so wished—as in Germany—to take a degree afterwards? This would end the present muddle.—I am, etc.,

Liverpool.

ROBERT REID RENTOUL.

SIR,—In connection with a correspondence that has recently appeared in your columns, the following is of interest, as showing how the whirligig of Time brings his revenges.—I am, etc.,

Canford, S.E.

CHAS. MERCIER.

To Dr. Laurence. Feb. 7, 1775.  
SIR,—One of the Scotch physicians is now prosecuting a corporation that in some public instrument have styled him *Doctor of Medicine* instead of *Physician*. Boswell desires, being advocate for the corporation, to know whether *Doctor of Medicine* is not a legitimate title, and whether it may be considered as a disadvantageous distinction. I am to write to-night; be pleased to tell me.—I am, Sir, your most, etc.,

SAM. JOHNSON.

To James Boswell, Esq. Feb. 7, 1775.  
I consulted this morning the President of the London College of Physicians, who says that with us *Doctor of Physic* (we do not say *Doctor of Medicine*) is the highest title that a practiser of physic can have, that *Doctor* implies not only *Physician*, but teacher of physic; that every *Doctor* is legally a *Physician*; but no man not a *Doctor* can practise *physic* but by licence particularly granted.—I am, sir, your most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

"L.S.A. AND SURGEON."

SIR,—The enclosed copy of a letter from Mr. J. R. Upton, in answer to a query of mine, re the titles of the new L.S.A. diploma, may be of use to your correspondent:

Austinfriars, London, E.C., November 2nd. 1891.

Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter the diploma of the Society of Apothe-