

# THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS AND THE COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,

I am anxious to offer a few observations to those General Practitioners who, having joined the National Association, are contemplating retiring from that body.

And first, I would ask such individuals if their conduct in so doing will be strictly honest? Sir James Graham was influenced in procuring a charter of incorporation, principally by the fact, that a great number of General Practitioners, especially of the class residing in the provinces, were desirous of receiving such charter. No sooner is there a prospect of such charter being obtained, than a number of those who were foremost in crying out for it immediately, set up a counter cry. It is quite clear that the names of all those who first joined the one, and then the other cry, ought to be published in a "supplemental register," as models of honesty and consistency.

There are several reasons assigned for leaving the Association and for opposing the new incorporation. Some say, "Oh! it will be a degradation to be a member of an inferior College or a third estate." I would ask these sensitive gentlemen, if there is more degradation in being a member of the College of General Practitioners than there is in being a General Practitioner? Do they really assert that it is degrading to be a General Practitioner? My own opinion is, that the General Practitioners will be infinitely more independent, and therefore more respectable, as such, then they ever will be, if they are content to remain the despised and repudiated tail of the College of Surgeons.

The *third estate* will not be created by the incorporation of the General Practitioners. Heretofore there have been really but two classes, the Physicians and General Practitioners, for Surgeon and General Practitioner have always been regarded as synonymous terms. Well then, the *third estate*, if it exist at all, has been made by the recent odious attempt of the College of Surgeons to constitute a class which does not, never did, nor ever will exist, viz., a class of pure, or rather mere, surgeons. It is clear then, that if there be any thing in priority, it is the new set that are to constitute the *third estate*, and the mere surgeon can only be regarded by all sensible men in that light, and ought to take rank among the dentists, aurists, and the like.

If the new College be properly worked, it contains all the elements of greatness within it. The College of Surgeons will cease to be an object of ambition to the professional mind, if the new institution be only carried out in a proper spirit. Let the first men in the profession be selected for its examining board, and who shall say its diploma will be inferior to that of any other corporation?

But the attachment of certain gentlemen to the College of Surgeons is certainly very amiable. The more the College kicks and spurns them, the more solicitous these gentlemen are to hug and kiss the dear creature. They may say, with Shylock,

"Fair Sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last;  
You spurned me such a day; another time  
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies "

they are extremely grateful, and will not be satisfied without a few more similar rebuffs.

The museum of the College of Surgeons is national property, and is to be in future open to the profession at large. As for the membership, of which some are so proud, have not the College authorities declared that there are no members, that the parties who are so called are mere licentiates, and are in future to be so considered? The authorities have sealed the fate of this College in every possible way. Down it is going, and even the attempts of poor infatuated Mr. Wakley cannot save it. It has been for some time in a declining state, and if the new College has only free scope, and is not grossly mismanaged, its predecessor's fall is certain, and that at no distant date. Who is there to keep up its influence? Where is the prestige which arises from great names to be found? Where are the Hunter's, the Abernethy's, the Cooper's? Echo answers, Where? The qualities of the present council are of a somewhat different order to those of the celebrated names just mentioned.

If there be one College more than another deserving of the patronage of Government and the support of the profession and of the public, it surely is the one which will be the most searching and most comprehensive in its examination of candidates for the diploma. It will be the duty as well as the interest of the new College to take care that both points are placed beyond dispute. An opportunity now offers for supplying the public with a class of men properly qualified to act in every department of the profession. As such, I trust, it will meet with the encouragement and support of every unprejudiced mind.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,  
A PROVINCIAL PRACTITIONER.

June 12, 1845.

## ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS.

Gentlemen admitted members on Friday, June 20, 1845:—J. S. Drury; R. S. Thornley; F. Horsfall; L. Llewellyn; H. Young; J. E. Palmer; H. A. Oldfield.

## SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

Gentlemen admitted licentiates on Thursday, June 12th:—J. Pemberton; F. R. Gibbes, Staveley; J. Hey; G. Pickess, Hadleigh; A. H. Bayly; C. Adcock; J. J. Mitchell, Bath; F. J. Hursley; M. Baines.

## OBITUARY.

June 4th, John Jackson, Esq., surgeon, of Beverley, a Member of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association.

## ERRATA.

Page 385, col. 2, line 24, for "curette," read "curette."  
Page 386, col. 2, line 11 from bottom, for "examining," read "examining."  
Page 387, col. 1, line 38, for "patient has been," read "patients have been."