

That they deplore the anomalous condition of the medical profession, and concur in the expediency of its revision by legislative enactment.

That although they regard with satisfaction some of the provisions contained in the projected bill of Sir James Graham, yet as a whole, they view it with disappointment, disapprobation, and alarm; for, while it professes to protect the medical profession, and the public health, they believe it to be directly and most grievously injurious to both.

That it offers direct encouragement to empiricism, with its enormous and incalculable evils, tends to degrade the educated and legalized practitioner, and to discourage and retard medical science.

That it is unjust to practitioners who have qualified themselves by a prolonged and expensive course of study, to subject them to an open and unrestricted competition with the uneducated, and while protecting the army and navy, together with the poorer classes, it fails to provide for the great body of the community, and exposes them to the wrongs and miseries of the ignorant and unprincipled pretender.

That the repeal of the Apothecaries' Act, without substituting ample security against empiricism, is both unwise and unjust; and that any bill which does not provide direct and efficient prohibition, will fail to give adequate protection to the profession and to the community.

Your petitioners therefore respectfully and humbly appeal to your honourable House, in confidence that the prayer of their petition will duly receive your serious and mature consideration.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Proposed by T. B. Maurice, Esq., seconded by Francis Cox, Esq., of Aldermaston, "That the Most Noble the Marquis of Downshire, Lord High Steward of the Borough of Reading, be respectfully requested to present the Petition to the House of Lords; and that Charles Russell, Esq., M.P., be respectfully requested to present the Petition to the House of Commons, and that Lord Viscount Chelsea be also solicited to support the prayer of the same."

Proposed by S. W. Kidgell, Esq., of Pangbourn, seconded by A. G. Field, Esq., "That copies of the Petition be sent to each Member of Parliament in the County, and to the Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal, The Lancet, Medical Gazette, Medical Times, The Times Newspaper, and the Reading Papers. And that every member of the profession be requested to exert his best interest in forwarding the objects of this meeting."

Proposed by Thomas Taylor, Esq., of Wargrave, seconded by J. Harrinson, Esq., "That the cordial thanks of this meeting be given to Dr. Smith, for his courteous and able conduct in the chair."

PUNISHMENT OF QUACKS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,

If, during the impending medical storm, Sir James Graham should think fit to suppress quackery and empiricism, let him look to olden time, and he will see how those affairs were then managed.

I rather fear the emolument derived from the stamps

will induce him to let loose on the public the whole host of quacks, hoping thereby to increase the golden harvest, though at the certain risk of the lives of her Majesty's subjects. No doubt he has in view the old adage, "si vulgus vult decipi decipiatur."

In Edward the Sixth's reign, one Grig, a poulterer, in Surrey, was set in the pillory at Croydon, and again in the Borough of Southwark, during the time of the fair, for cheating people out of their money, by pretending to cure them by charms, by only looking at the patient, or by casting his water.

In the reign of the first James, the council dispatched a warrant to the magistrates of the city of London, to take up all reputed empirics, and bring them before the censors of the college, to examine how properly qualified they were to be trusted either with the limbs or lives of his Majesty's subjects.

Dr. Lamb, a most noted quack, and one who had got a large fortune by his pretended medicines, was at last obliged to confess he knew nothing of physic.

Read and Woodhouse, two other contemporary quacks, were likewise brought to justice, and acknowledged the same.

In Stowe's Chronicle we meet with a relation of a water-caster being set on horseback, his face to the horse's tail, which he held in his hand, with a collar of urinals about his neck, led by the hangman through the city, whipped, branded, and then banished.

Fairfax was fined and imprisoned in King William's time for doing great damage to several persons by his "Aqua Celestis;" also one Anthony, with his "Aurum Potabile;" Arthur Dee, for advertising medicines which he gave out would cure people of all diseases; Foster for selling a powder for the green sickness; Aires for selling purging sugar-plums; and Tenant, a urine-caster, who sold his pills at a pound each. Hunt was punished for putting up bills in the streets for the cure of diseases; and Phillips, a distiller, for selling strong waters, inserting in the directions what they were good for, and how persons were to take them.

I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. H. BALLER.

Bideford, September 7, 1844.

OBITUARY.

Died, on Tuesday, Sept. 10th, aged 47, John Jenkins Maclean, Esq., of Boston, Lincolnshire.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Dr. Black; Mr. J. F. Clarke; Mr. Godfrey; Mr. Newnham; Dr. G. Fife; Mr. Martin, of Reigate; Mr. Daniell; and Mr. Ewen.

Studiosus cannot avail himself of the advantages he alludes to without the permission of the gentleman with whom he is engaged. Mr. Newnham's letter is in type, but is unavoidably postponed till next week.

It is requested that all letters and communications be sent to Dr. Streeten, Foregate Street, Worcester. Parcels, and books for review, may be addressed to the Editor of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal, care of Mr. Churchill, Princes Street, Soho.