

To the Members of my own Profession, Electors of the City of Dublin.

GENTLEMEN,—I venture to address the following observations to all members of my Profession, without distinction, who are entitled to vote at the approaching election for a representative of our City in Parliament.

In my address to the whole constituency I necessarily, and in accordance with the practice in such addresses, confined myself to three great political questions now agitating the public mind, and on which the great struggle of political parties is soon to take place.

But constituents and candidates know that there are always many other questions of great importance to be considered, to which each candidate will give his attention according to his special knowledge, and the circumstances in which he may be placed.

For myself one of the paramount objects to which I will devote my attention, should I be elected, will be to remove the great injustice and cruelty of the present law under which the Dispensary Medical Officers of Ireland now labour, the injustice and cruelty of taking their services for the public as long as they have bodily strength to labour by day and by night, and then when old age and infirmity disable them, turning them out to starve and die without the smallest pension or pittance.

To the object of repealing this cruel state of the law I will devote unwearied and unceasing exertion.

The course I should propose to pursue would be somewhat different to what has been hitherto followed.

Hitherto the course adopted to endeavour to attain the desired relief has been by introducing a clause into other bills, Poor Law Bills, Civil Superannuation Bills, etc., while passing through the House. The result has always been defeat.

I know from some experience in such matters that the proposal of any clause introducing any new element into a bill during its passing is always viewed with great jealousy by the House, and on this account is seldom if ever warmly supported, lest it should imperil the original Bill.

The course I should propose to myself would be to make the desired relief the substance of a short bill probably of not more than two clauses, with a preamble to the effect that "Whereas it is just and expedient, etc., etc., to provide superannuation allowance for Medical Officers of Dispensaries, etc. etc. It is hereby enacted, etc.," then expressing the conditions on which such might be given.

The attention of members could then be drawn exclusively to the bill, their objections met, and their support gained. I am confident that it is only necessary to make the members of the House of Commons thoroughly acquainted with the question, to obtain their assent to such a measure, founded as it is on mere justice. To explain and carry such a bill I would give my time and efforts unceasingly, and earnestly seizing every opportunity of discussing it individually with members; for it is only by patient and personal explanation, and not in some single formal debate, that success will be attained. To enable me to do this, *I now ask the votes and influence of you all, Gentlemen, members of my profession without distinction, who are electors of Dublin.*

If you, Gentlemen, will support me in this endeavour to obtain justice for the Dispensary Medical Officers of Ireland, I am certain of success. If you desert me, if but a single vote of a member of position in the profession be recorded against me, that vote will operate injuriously to the prejudice of our country brethren; for, no matter how strong their case, the hostile member of Parliament will shelter himself behind such vote and say he does not believe their statement, for he will allege that, were it so bad as they state, there surely could not be found in the whole profession a single member so heartless as to bar the way, and exclude from Parliament the Candidate who had knowledge and will to support their case.

I know there are reasons that may lead some members of my profession to believe that they are not only justified but bound to vote against me at the coming election. I know that these reasons spring from a high principle of conscientiousness, and I respect them for it, differing from me as they do on the Church question; but the motive will be of no avail in counteracting the injurious effects of the act. My election or non-election cannot have the weight of a feather in the result to the Church Establishment in either way, while the effect of a single hostile vote may work unbounded harm to the cause we have all at heart, and our professional brethren in the country may with bitter and desponding feelings think there is little sympathy for them where they hoped for help.

Gentlemen, I now ask you, in the interval between this and the day of election, to weigh the question in all its bearings in your minds. I know your decision, whatever it may be, will be conscientious, and I can only hope you will come to the conclusion that the case, as it stands now before you, rests on peculiar grounds, and that you may without any sacrifice of principle give your votes for the attainment of a practical good rather than waste them for no result.

I have the honour to remain, Gentlemen, yours truly,

D. J. CORRIGAN.