

EDITOR'S LETTER BOX.

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SIR JOHN FORBES'S SCHEME OF A MEDICAL REFORM BILL.

LETTER FROM SIR J. FORBES, M.D.

SIR.—Having found that several of my friends have misunderstood more than one of the provisions in my "Scheme of a Medical Bill", owing to the peculiar mode of distribution of the various matters contained in it in conformity with the technical form in which it is arranged, I have drawn up the following outline of its principal contents in plainer language, and shall be greatly obliged by your giving it a place in your pages.

OUTLINE.

I. One Council to be constituted for regulating all matters relating to the medical profession not settled by the Act; to have for its President a member of the Legislature, nominated by a Secretary of State; and to sit, at its pleasure, in London, Edinburgh, or Dublin.

II. The Council to consist of fifteen or sixteen members; one half to be chosen by the Medical Corporations (one by each Corporation), and the other half to be selected (first plan) by the President, or to be elected (second plan) by the profession at large by ballot; the members to hold office for three years, and five to be a quorum.

III. A permanent Committee of three of its members, to be nominated by the Council, to act in the intervals of the Council sittings, in conjunction with the registrars, in the discharge of all ordinary business.

IV. A registrar, who must be a medical man, to be appointed by the Council for England, Ireland, and Scotland, respectively.

V. The minutes of the proceedings of Council to be accessible to the members of the profession.

VI. The Examination Boards to be three in each country, viz., a Preliminary Board to be nominated by the Council, and the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.

VII. No person to be permitted to commence his curriculum of medical studies until he has completed his seventeenth year, nor until he has passed an examination in ancient and modern languages, arithmetic, geometry, mathematics, and physics, etc.; that is to say, until he has given proof of his having received a good general education, qualifying him to profit by his future studies, and to take his proper place in society.

VIII. At the end of his first year of study the student is to be examined by the Preliminary Board on the subjects of his first year's study, viz., in chemistry, botany, *materia medica*, pharmacy, and the rudiments of anatomy.

IX. After four years of medical study, and on having attained the age of 22, the student is to be examined: 1st, by the College of Surgeons in anatomy, surgery, and midwifery; and, 2ndly, by the College of Physicians in medicine; and, on passing both these examinations, is to obtain a diploma constituting him a licentiate or a member of the College of Surgeons by which he has been examined; and this diploma is to entitle the holder to be registered as a legally qualified practitioner, and as a surgeon.

X. The foregoing curriculum and examinations are to be undergone by every person entering the medical profession, whether intending to practise as physician, surgeon, or general practitioner; but persons possessing the degree of M.D. desirous of being registered as physicians, must, in addition, and after attaining their twenty-sixth year, pass an examination before the College of Physicians, and obtain a diploma as member or licentiate of that College; and it is left optional with this class of students to take or omit taking the diploma in surgery.

XI. Members or licentiates of either of the Colleges to have the right to claim to be examined for the Fellowship of their own College on the established terms.

XII. Precisely the same curriculum of study, the same examination, the same amount of qualification, and the same mode of registration, to be enforced in each of the three countries, and to entitle to reciprocity of practice in all.

XIII. The Council to have the power to fix the course of studies to be undergone by students, and to have the power of enforcing uniformity of examination, by deputing some of their members to be present at the examinations.

XIV. Provincial students may take the first or literary examination at their own school, but must undergo the second

examination at the close of their first year's study before the Preliminary Board in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, or Glasgow.

XV. A register of all practitioners to be published annually in each of the three countries, containing the following lists:—1. An alphabetical list of all legally qualified practitioners. 2. A list of physicians in two divisions, fellows and members. 3. A list of surgeons in two divisions, fellows and members. [The latter list will, of course, include all the class of practitioners now commonly termed "general practitioners".]

XVI. No annual fee for registration, and no annual certificates to be required; a single fee on being first registered, to suffice for all future registrations. This fee to be ten [or twenty] shillings in the case of persons in practice before the Act, and to be two [three or four] pounds to those who enter the profession after the passing of the Act.

XVII. Persons in practice before the passing of the Act to be allowed twelve months for registration.

XVIII. No unregistered person to be allowed to hold any public appointment after the passing of the Act, or to be in any way recognised as a legally qualified practitioner; and unregistered persons taking any professional title, or acting in the capacity of a medical man, to be subject to punishment.

XIX. Only persons registered can recover charges for medical or surgical attendance in a court of law.

I am, etc., JOHN FORBES.

Old Burlington Street, June 17th, 1854.

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