

a seat in Council may have disturbed his thoughts. This indignity should surely be wiped out of the charter. Mr. Hawkins refers most properly to the importance of *selection* of examiners. I hope I may be also permitted to speak on this question. On three different occasions I have had the honour of being selected an examiner in surgery by the Royal College of Physicians. I have also for some years acted as one of the examiners of candidates for Her Majesty's naval and military services, so that my experience as an examiner may somewhat justify this expression of an opinion. By accident the College of Surgeons has had the advantage of the services of the Professor of Anatomy in the University of Cambridge. Why should the Professor of Physiology in the same university, or the like professor at Oxford, or the Professor of Anatomy in University College or King's College, London, without the title of F.R.C.S., be unattainable? Even the universities appoint examiners not of themselves. Until the other day the appointment of the present distinguished President of the Royal Society as an examiner was impossible!

I wish now to speak of matters not referred to in Mr. Hawkins' letter. Before the Council finally decide the points of the new charter, it appears to me that it would not only be an act of courtesy to the Fellows and Members, but that it is due to them, and to the Council also, to call a general meeting, and place any revised plan of charter before such a meeting of Fellows and Members for final approval. I personally would even urge the Council a step further, to act with a thoroughly liberal spirit, such as would be cordially recognised and fully appreciated by the large body of Fellows and Members. Before the final alterations in the charter are decided on, let a committee be appointed, to consist of a certain number of the Council, a certain number of Fellows not in the Council, and a certain number of the Members—a joint committee elected to consider the whole question, to draw up such suggestions as may appear to them desirable, and having reported them to the Council, let the latter call a final meeting to discuss, sanction, or negative such points as may appear desirable. We cannot too strongly bear in mind that the new charter is not a thing that simply belongs to the Council. The Council is but the executive of the Fellows and Members. The charter should be the charter of our great Corporation—President, Council, Fellows, and Members. The Fellows and Members have the moral right to demand that any new charter should embody their views as well as those of the Council, and if rightly viewed it will be so considered by all. The Council by carrying out the suggestions and wishes of the body corporate will have done their best to meet the objects of the Fellows and Members, and will have done all in their power and wisdom to obviate serious defects being handed down to their successors to deal with in time to come.

I feel satisfied the Council individually and collectively have but one object—viz., to uphold the honour of our profession, and by modifying the present charter, as all could wish, to render that honour unassailable. But there are always in small bodies of men some individuals who are difficult to move, who are more or less prejudiced by things as they are, rather than turn to those which should be; so when considering the question of the presidency, such may feel averse to the change suggested by Mr. Hawkins from an inward misgiving that their turn of service may never come. Such personal feelings should not weigh when the honour and welfare of the College and profession are placed in the scale. But human nature is weak—

"When self the wavering balance shakes,  
It's rarely right adjusted."

I must draw attention to the fact, to which my notice was called by others, that though the important question of the future charter was to be discussed at a general meeting of the Fellows and Members, convened by the Council, with ample notice to everyone concerned, several Members of the Council were not present, nor were excuses offered by those absent. Illness alone should have been the excuse. If men undertake duties attaching to a seat in the Council, but which they have no care to carry out, or are unable to attend to, an additional reason may be urged for a joint committee of Council, Fellows, and Members to be appointed to consider the future charter, and this at a special public meeting. Do not the above observations apply also in support of Mr. Hawkins' suggestion for an alteration in Section 5 of the bye-laws?

There is, perhaps, no immediate haste to settle these

suggested alterations. Let us carefully, cautiously, and thoroughly consider them, and when finally approved by the Fellows and Members in public meeting assembled, nothing would remain but the graceful duty of the Council to carry them out. *Sat cito, si sat bene.*

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Grosvenor-street, April 14th, 1884.

GEORGE D. POLLOCK.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—The amusing letter of Mr. Harry Campbell in your last issue on Dr. Hickman's proposal calls, I think, for a few words of comment.

Your correspondent states that "Dr. Hickman proposes that the licentiate of the amalgamated Colleges should be permitted to write after his name, Licentiate of the Amalgamated College." Mr. Harry Campbell then proceeds to invent a title (L.A.C.), which he insinuates is what Dr. Hickman would suggest. He then adds M.D., M.S., making his imaginary licentiate the possessor of the following initials, L.A.C., M.D., M.S., and tells us that such a proposal strikes him as being most humorous. Mr. Harry Campbell is to be congratulated on possessing such a keen sense of humour. The actual text of Dr. Hickman's motion will be found in your issue of the 29th March, and contains no words referring to the initials L.A.C.

Your correspondent goes on to say that Dr. Hickman fails to recognise the essential nature of a degree, and that a degree can only be granted by a university; and, further, that any body empowered to confer degrees becomes a university. Mr. Harry Campbell speaks as though the present state of affairs were as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, quite overlooking the fact that before the year 1858 the Archbishop of Canterbury granted a doctorate conferring the degree of M.D. Perhaps Mr. Harry Campbell will tell us that the archbishop was a university. The terms "Architect Jones," "Sculptor Robinson," are not fair examples of titles. They are never seen on door plates nor visiting cards, while that of Dr. Smith is a very usual one. But it is evident that the mere right or privilege to prefix "Dr." would not place the English general practitioner on an equal footing with his more fortunate Scottish brother who has undergone no severer test of his proficiency in medical learning. What is required by English practitioners is a solid right and not an empty title of courtesy.

Mr. Harry Campbell, further on in his letter, imagines an unfortunate individual saddled with a multitude of initials after his name. The cure for this ailment is simple. The mythical "John Jones" is not bound to offer himself as a candidate for honours and titles which he considers onerous. After all, the objection which Mr. Harry Campbell has to a long string of letters is not very reasonable as an argument against Dr. Hickman's motion. A substitution of M.D., M.S., for M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Lond., is a clear gain of several letters; and the owner of these degrees is not forced to take M.A., M.D. degrees at any university if he has an objection to repetition.

If your correspondent has any real and well-founded objection to Dr. Hickman's proposal, let him by all means bring it forward; but mere ridicule of the motion is no argument against it. I am not a L.R.C.P. Lond. myself, and have no titular decorations to gain by the passing of the motion, and I therefore trust you will allow that my remarks are unprejudiced by selfish motives, and are only inspired by a sense of fair play.

I am, Sir, yours very truly,

A. ST. CLAIR BUXTON, F.R.C.S.

Orchard-street, Portman-square, W., April 15th, 1884.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LODGE.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Permit me through your columns to make known to the medical graduates of the University of London that H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, as Grand Master, has issued a warrant for the consecration of a new Lodge of Freemasons to be called as above, and that the ceremony will be performed by the Earl of Carnarvon on the 14th of May. I shall be glad to give any information to gentlemen wishing to join, or to others desirous of being initiated, who are members of the University.—Yours faithfully,

ALFRED MEADOWS.

27, George-street, Hanover-square, April, 1884.