ALDERSGATE-STREET DISPENSARY.

ADDRESS FROM COLCHESTER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As a *brief* notice only of the resolution unanimously passed at the meeting of the Colchester Medical Society, held October 29, 1833, appears in your last, the particulars of which were by some mistake not immediately inserted in your valuable journal, while an account of several meetings *held since* have been given *at length*, you will oblige the Society and myself by giving place to the following in your next number; and I have the honour to remain,

Yours very obediently,

ALDERMAN PARTRIDGE,
Treasurer and Secretary.

Colchester, 25th November, 1833.

At a meeting of the Colchester Medical Society, October 29, 1833, the following resolution was proposed and unanimously agreed to:—

“That this meeting is desirous of expressing its cordial approbation of the course pursued by the late medical officers of the *Aldersgate-Street Dispensary*, in resigning their situations in that institution, when they could not retain them without compromising their own characters, nor without injuring the best interests of a charity, to which they have so long and so faithfully afforded their valuable and gratuitous services.”

“In thus manfully maintaining a principle that involves in it the honour and respectability of the profession, they have offered an example well worthy the imitation of their medical brethren, as well as fully deserving the serious consideration of all who take an interest in the permanent welfare and success of every similar institution.

“If places, which should be occupied only by men of science and respectability, are, in effect, to be avowedly sold by public auction whenever the office of physician or surgeon becomes vacant, there is an end to all honourable competition,—unblushing ignorance, backed by money, may usurp the place of superior talent and integrity, while the situation thus degradingly obtained, will soon cease to be worth the purchase. Moreover, it may be observed, that every institution *thus* propped up for a time, must soon lose the support of its *old* and *regular* subscribers, who will retire in disgust, and leave it eventually to become the merited sacrifice of a mercenary and short-sighted policy.

“In conclusion, the meeting *laments exceedingly*, that any individuals should be found so forgetful of what is due to themselves, and to the honourable profession to which they belong, as, under such circumstances, to accept of offices that were resigned by their predecessors for reasons so just and praise worthy, and with the universal approbation of their medical brethren, both in the metropolis and throughout the country.”

(Signed)

T. Tomkin, *Surgeon*, Witham, Essex (*President*).

R. D. Mackintosh, M.D., *Physician to the Colchester and Essex Hospital*.

Edward Liveing, *Surg.*, Nayland, Suffolk.

William Wayles, *Surg. to the Essex and Col. Hosp.*

Henry Horatio Bidwell, *Surg.*, Dedham, Essex.

John Sergeant Norman, *Surg.*, Merse, Essex.

John Lawton, *Surg.*, Boxford, Suffolk.

Alderman Partridge, *Surg. to the Essex and Col. Hosp.*

Roger Nunn, M.D., *Surg. to the Essex and Col. Hosp.*

Robert Bewick, *Surg.*, East Bergholt, Suffolk.

James Henry Smith, *Surg.*, Manningtree, Essex.

D. L. Manthorpe, *Surg.*, Thorp, Essex.

J. G. Daniell, *Surg.*, Nayland, Suffolk.

A. Maclean, M.D., *Physician to the Essex and Col. Hosp.*

Philip Gretton, *Surg.*, Colchester.

B. F. Symmonds, *Surg.*, Bines, Suffolk.

MEDICAL REFORM.

MEETING AT SHEFFIELD.

At a General Meeting of the Members of the Medical Profession resident in Sheffield and its vicinity, held at the *Savings Bank*, Sheffield, on Monday, December 2, 1833,

CORDEN THOMPSON, M.D. in the chair, the following resolutions were proposed seconded, and passed UNANIMOUSLY:—

1. Proposed by Mr. BOULTBEE, and seconded by G. C. HOLLAND, M.D.

“Considering the improved and daily improving state of medical science, the great enlargement of its boundaries, the brilliant progress of our continental brethren, from the superiority of their medical regulations and institutions, together with the liberal views and sentiments now so generally prevalent throughout the profession, it is the opinion of this meeting,

that the existing medical incorporations of the United Kingdom ARE ALTOGETHER INADEQUATE TO THE EXTENDED AND GROWING WANTS OF THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC, such incorporations being either radically defective in constitution, and arbitrary and unjust in operation, or antiquated, and insufficient for the advancement of the healing art, and the effectual prevention of empiricism."

2. Proposed by Mr. E. GILLOTT, and seconded by C. F. FAVELL, M.D.

"That it is intolerably grievous and flagrantly unjust for the regular practitioner to be compelled by medical corporations to incur great expense and consume much time and labour in qualifying himself for the duties of his vocation, whilst the same corporations have NEITHER THE POWER NOR THE PRETENSIONS to protect him against the encroachments of the most NOTORIOUS EMPIRICS, and the various unlicensed pretenders to medicine with which every town in the kingdom swarms."

3. Proposed by H. P. HARWOOD, M.D., and seconded by Mr. GREEN.

"That the absurdity and evils of the present system of medical regulations, are strikingly illustrated by the fact,—that a practitioner educated and duly licensed by one corporate body, can be precluded by another from exercising his profession in certain towns and districts over which such body holds jurisdiction; and that it is preposterous and unjust in the extreme for this jurisdiction to be exercised by men professing deriving their education from UNIVERSITIES where proper scientific and practical medical instruction and examinations are absolutely unknown; as is the case, for example, with the Fellows of the LONDON COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,—and that such a system tends simply to monopoly of practice and individual aggrandisement, at the expense of the interests of the public and the profession in general."

4. Proposed by Mr. W. JACKSON, and seconded by Mr. E. GILLOTT.

"That the present constitution of the ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN LONDON, by which the self-election, self-perpetuation, and irresponsibility of its managing Council is permitted;—the HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS, moreover, and LECTURES, which the members of this Council hold, and their power of rejecting any educational testimonials from other teachers, are circumstances totally irreconcilable with the due advancement of the profession, and the rights of every member of the College."

5. Proposed by Mr. WALKER, and seconded by J. F. WRIGHT.

"That, it is utterly derogatory to the character and dignity of the profession for the regulation of medical practice and education to be in the hands of an avowedly TRADING COMPANY."

6. Proposed by Mr. GREEN, and seconded by Mr. K. WILSON.

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the entire system of MEDICAL EDUCATION and APPRENTICESHIPS, as well as that of LICENSING practitioners, urgently demands revision. The present mode of licensing by various distinct bodies, with professedly distinct views, and yet all for a similar purpose, as for example by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, by the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and by the Company of Apothecaries in England and Wales, and by various other colleges and faculties in Scotland and Ireland, is not only irrational in itself, but mischievous in its effects, and is especially grievous to the members of the profession, inasmuch as certain licentiates claim, exclusively, offices, privileges, and distinctions, with their attendant honours and emoluments, to which they have no reasonable pretension or right beyond the rest of their medical brethren."

7. Proposed by C. F. FAVELL, M.D., and seconded by Mr. TURTON.

"That, since it is impossible for all these separate bodies, possessing distinct and separate interests, and regarding each other frequently with jealousy, and even disrespect, cordially to unite and co-operate in forwarding the public good and advancement of the profession, this meeting considers that ONE "FACULTY" OR "ACADEMY OF MEDICINE," ALONE, SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN EACH OF THE THREE CAPITALS OF THESE REALMS, for the purpose of regulating medical practice and education, which it is advisable to reduce to one uniform standard throughout the empire."

8. Proposed by G. C. HOLLAND, M.D. and seconded by Mr. E. THOMPSON.

"Deeply impressed with the importance of the MEDICAL CHARITIES of this country, in reference to science and humanity, and viewing the exclusive system in some, and the abuses in all, relative to the election of medical officers, this meeting is of opinion that all such ELECTIONS should take place by PUBLIC COMPETITION before a duly-constituted medical tribunal; and, further, that, as in other countries, the general medical management of such charities, in all matters touching the promotion

of medical science and education, should be UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE AFORESAID FACULTY OF MEDICINE, subject to the control of the legislature, in order to their being rendered as extensively useful as possible to the student, the profession, and the public at large."

9. Proposed by Mr. J. F. WRIGHT, and seconded by Mr. RICHARDSON.

"That a PETITION embracing the substance of the foregoing resolutions, and also praying for a PALIAMENTARY COMMITTEE to inquire into the general state of the profession throughout the United Kingdom, be drawn up for presentation to the HOUSE OF COMMONS."

10. Proposed by Mr. TURTON, and seconded by H. P. HARWOOD, M.D.

"That this meeting does hereby appeal to ALL MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSION, generally, and urgently calls upon them to come forward with promptness to aid by every means in their power the promotion of a GRAND NATIONAL MEDICAL REFORM worthy of themselves and of the country to which they belong."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

Sir,—I have great pleasure in forwarding you the preceding resolutions, and in recording the unanimous feeling with which they were passed. There was not a dissentient voice on this occasion, and it remains only for the profession generally to come forward and express their sentiments thus unitedly and firmly, in order to the obtaining of that reform which the present state of things so urgently calls for.

I am, Sir, &c.,

CORDEN THOMPSON.

THE LANCET.

London, Saturday, December 7, 1833.

At length, after ten years of anxious discussion, it is acknowledged that the graduate of a Scotch university should enjoy the same rights in London as in Edinburgh; and that the graduate of the University of Dublin in either of those places should have the same privileges as in his own country. Any other order of things, having an invidious distinction for its basis, must only tend to perpetuate

national animosities, and disgrace the professors of medical science.

The example of liberality should not be wanting in a profession, the great object of which is the security of the welfare of mankind. Instead of restrictions, then, we would substitute *equality of rights* for medical practitioners in all parts of the British dominions. Having proved by one competent test, viz. a public examination, that they had received a sufficient education, the graduates of the several Faculties or national Colleges should enjoy uniformity of privilege in exercising the duties of their profession, and thus let their talents, and the use which they can afterwards make of them, be their recommendations to preferment and patronage.

Uniformity of education and equality of rights, therefore, should be the great objects of attainment in any change which may be made in the state of medical affairs in these countries; without them we see not how the absurdities of the present system can be effectually removed. But then it is contended that there exist many obstacles to the accomplishment of those desirable objects. Thus, the establishment of a uniform system of education suggests the discussion of the question how that uniformity is to be effected where there are so many private interests involved in the change, and so many public bodies to be brought to agree on this subject. There can be no doubt that this is a point of much delicacy, if not of difficulty, and one requiring no small share of judgment in its management. Yet it is one of those questions the difficulties of which appear rather to diminish than increase by an attentive consideration of the subject.

Let us first, then, examine the question with reference to the Universities. What, we may inquire, is there in the constitution of those bodies which should prevent them from adopting a uniform system of