

such a trifle, as completely to put an end to the horrible crime of "Burking," for the committing of which, the present high price given for them holds forth such a strong temptation.

The medical profession at large, and the intelligent part of the community, would, without doubt, cordially join in affixing their signatures to such petitions. With an earnest hope that the measure may be carried into effect,

I remain, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

A MEDICAL STUDENT.

December, 1831.

REMEDY FOR BURKING.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A medical adage says, "In extremos morbos, extrema remedia." I fear the time has arrived when the extreme remedy must be applied, for to me it seems that anatomy is on its last legs. Shackled by the prejudices and ignorance of the public, exposed on the slightest excitement to the blind fury of the mob, nothing but a bold and vigorous effort of the profession can save us from the difficulties and dangers with which we are beset. From the Bill lately introduced into the Commons House of Parliament by Mr. Warburton, we have nothing to expect; it will probably become the law of the land, simply because it does nothing; because, with the appearance of effecting a beneficial change, it really leaves the great question untouched; even my Lord Brougham, he who has girded himself so fearlessly to lop off the rotten branches of the constitution, would temporise, would wait until the present excitement had subsided, would become a bit by-bit reformer of medical abuses. Alas! "*Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus.*" It is therefore evident that as we can expect but little assistance from the legislature, and still less indulgence from the public, something must be done by the medical community, and I would, in all seriousness, propose, that the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries do forthwith rescind those by-laws which at present compel a student to be guilty of possessing a knowledge of anatomy; that they henceforward require no certificates of dissection, or of attendance on anatomical lectures: this, Sir, is my *extremum remedium*; the feelings of the public will no longer be violated by the prosecution of anatomy; the student, instead of toiling day after day in the dissecting room, will walk along "the broad

and easy way which leadeth to destruction" (of his patients), diseases and fees will be more abundant than ever, and the enlightened inhabitants of this country will enjoy the benefit of being victimized by men who will know infinitely less of anatomy than a Smithfield-butcher.

I remain, Sir,

P. H. GREEN.

Borough, Jan. 1832.

NEW ANATOMY BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A considerable stir is being made at Norwich, and other great towns where there are hospitals of some magnitude, respecting the Anatomy Bill. And I now address you on their behalf, as a country anatomist who is equally desirous to promote the interests of science, the ends of justice, and the cause of humanity. I contend that the declaration of eminent surgeons, recently vaunted forth in the papers, is a document calculated in my opinion to mislead government and to perpetuate injustice. If the COUNTRY SCHOOLS were opened, there would be enough surgeons to supply the wants of the public, without introducing a Bill into Parliament for legalising the sale of the dead bodies of the poor. The bill for legalising the sale of game was aristocratic enough, for its tendency is to cherish the base passion of aggrandizement among the aristocracy, and enable them to pay off their debts by selling the produce of their preserves. But the Anatomy Bill tends to inspire cupidity and avarice of the worst kind in a class of society where its operation will not be so innocent. For what, I ask, can be the effect of such a measure on the corrupt and venal part of the pauper-population, but to tempt them to commit, in secret, the very crime which it is intended to supersede? Will not an unprincipled executor or relative be as likely to kill a helpless and forlorn wretch, dying perhaps in an obscure garret, and attended only by his heir, as a resurrection man will be to "burk a lost traveller, or a stray apprentice in the dark,"—while the respectable part of the poor will be shocked at the imagined outrage on Christianity, committed by the bill. The most moral period in England was that of the reign of Edward I., when the respect for the bodies of departed relations was carried to its highest pitch—when the children used to go on every Sunday and Festival to hang the votive garland, or plant the "*forget-me-not*" flower, on the grave of their departed sire or beloved