them.' If the writer of the paper in question, or the Editor of Blackwood, should see this letter, they are *implored* to consider its purport; and thus prevent the public from viewing their medical attendants with *dis-trust*, and withholding those confidential disclosures which are essential to the due performance of our professional duties. The very persons who would read such a series of articles as the 'Passages from the Diary of a late Physician' promise to be, with intense interest, would be the first to act on the principle I have mentioned.'

"If I were not credibly assured, Sir Christopher, that this letter is the production of a distinguished member of the profession, I should have felt inclined to compress my commentary on it into one emphatic little word—*humbug!* As it is, however, I beg to ask the writer who is so ready at starting the grave charge of a breach of professional confidence, what I do more, in publishing in your Magazine these papers of my late friend, with the most scrupulous concealment of every-thing which could possibly lead to undue disclosures, than is constantly done in the pages of *THE LANCET* itself, as well as all the other professional journals, text-books, and treatises, which almost invariably append *real initials*, [I appeal to every medical man whether such is not the fact] and other *indicia*, to the most painful, and in many instances, revolting and offensive details?" — *Blackwood's Magazine*, Oct. 1830.

MR. LYNN AND MR. ELMORE.

To the Editor of *THE LANCET*.

"When thieves fall out, somebody comes to his own."—*Proverbs*.

SIR,—Proverbs are not the most elegant vehicles of wisdom, but we ought not on that account to reject them; by this mode Solomon and Sancho Panza gave us more practical truths, than we have derived from any other source since the deluge. Deprecating your objections to these plebeian morsels of morality, let us see how far my motto will apply to the present question.

For the Council of the College of Surgeons I have the most profound contempt; for their principles and proceedings I have an abhorrence even to loathing; therefore I shall not be suspected of the infamy of attempting their defence or justification. Yet cannot help thinking that the disappointed candidates for seats in the council, are not entitled to the sympathy or support of their brethren the members. On what grounds do the rejected gentlemen found their

claims to the *honour* to which they aspire, and to what uses would they apply the power when obtained? They demanded to become councillors on the ground that they were "pure surgeons;" and doubtless, as councillors would do nothing to expose the fallacy of their claims to distinction, they would do nothing to procure for the members at large equality of honours and emoluments; they would not vote for the admission of those members who are general practitioners; they would not, on the exclusion of one of this much-injured body, resign their seats, rather than herd with men whose public acts are a reproach. Under these circumstances, I cannot allow that the complainants deserve the countenance and assistance of their fellow members.

From the "pure surgeons" the councillors are selected; from the council are elected the examiners, and from the examiners is chosen the president; the claims of the disappointed are founded on corruption, and they ought not to be assisted by the independent. The point at issue reminds me of Sir Robert Walpole's definition of a "certain kind of patriot." This *patriotic* minister boasted he could make forty patriots in a night; his recipe was simple, and must be known to the council of the Royal College, "Refuse a man a favour, and up starts a patriot."

Your faithful servant,

WM. AUGUSTUS WALFORD.

Oct. 2nd, 1830.

DRS. GORDON SMITH, RYAN, AND
A. THOMSON.

Note to Dr. Ryan.

DR. GORDON SMITH presents his compliments to Dr. Ryan, and desires to inform him that he has seen the article in the *Medical and Surgical Journal* for this month, in reply to Dr. Smith's defence of Dr. Thomson's medico-legal document. It is Dr. Smith's design to insert a few words on the subject in the forthcoming number of *THE LANCET*; but in consequence of the unauthorised use which Dr. Ryan has made of Dr. Smith's *private* communications, the acquaintance between them necessarily terminates.

Oct. 1, 1830.

To the Editor of *THE LANCET*.

Having forwarded the above to you, Mr. Editor, I may as well take public leave of Dr. Ryan, by adding the following explicit statements. Dr. Ryan certainly did join me in an application to the Court of Examiners at Apothecaries' Hall, on the sub-