Cockney idea of striking with more self-importance the Board of Examiners," and then, when in the worst possible taste he casts his reflections upon the Latin examination, he insinuates that I was "very gently dealt with in common with all the other candidates from *country practice*!" Is there any "garbled colouring" or "artful dodging" in all this, Dr. Macdonald? Is not this "rash folly," reducing yourself and your office to the lowest "insignificance"? Do you believe such a circumstance ever occurred at the University of St. Andrew's, as that a candidate presented himself to the Board of Medical Examiners without his place of residence being well known to them, or that any candidate ever withheld or misstated his place of residence under the influence of the paltry motives you attribute to me?

I have neither time nor inclination, Mr. Editor, to pursue this subject further; but I cannot conclude without a word of advice to this advocate for crafty empiricism, this avowed enemy to legitimate and scientific medicine, and it is briefly this: that when he next replies to any letter implicating himself and his quackeries, let me pray him to avoid slang terms, to rise superior to slang artifices, to adopt the gentleman in manner, the scholar in language and argument; then, Sir, your readers will not have to exclaim—

"We behold the sorrowful change wrought upon a fallen nature,
He hath lost his own esteem and other men's respect."

Yours, Mr. Editor,

Emsworth, Nov. 1851.

GEORGE MILLER, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read in THE LANCET of last week the extraordinary effusion signed "W. Macdonald, M.D., P.," in which *inter alia*, it is asserted that the St. Andrew's anti-homœopathic protest, recently inserted in your columns, and designated by you as "admirable," was "somewhat altered from the insolent document which the University refused to receive." To this assertion I beg to give the most direct and emphatic denial which the courtesies of society will permit, and as a proof that I am justified in expressing a very positive opinion on this matter, I may be allowed to state, that with the exception of the time during which it was the subject of the Senate's deliberations, the "Protest" was never out of my sight from the moment of its authorship to that of its consignment to the custody of her Majesty's Postmaster General on its way to your office, and that if necessary, the identity of the document transmitted to you, with that which was laid before the Senatus Academicus could be verified on oath. Knowing as I do the truth of what I now state, and furthermore, that the guardianship of the protest was confided to me by those sixteen gentlemen whose sentiments and whose signatures (in conjunction with my own) it embodied and bore, I trust I may be excused for feeling excessively indignant at the imputation (emanating even from so angry a man as Dr. Macdonald evidently is) that it had been tampered with—an imputation equivalent to that of a flagrant breach of trust on the part of myself as the custodian of the protest. This is the only portion of Dr. Macdonald's very irate production which I conceive falls fairly within my province to reply to; for as respects his insolence to Dr. Miller, and his assumption of contempt for yourself, Mr. Editor, as a sneerer at "the describer of the anatomy of Lucifer and Michael," I have the greatest satisfaction in leaving him in hands so every way qualified to do him justice. I trust, Sir, that you will not be deterred (pending Dr. Macdonald's consideration of the steps which he may deem necessary for his adoption against you) from a bold and fearless condemnation of homœopathic opinions and practice, whether occurring in his person or in that of any other man, however high his social or professional position, and that you will continue in the same unflinching and unflinching course of hostility which has hitherto characterized your writings respecting this most dangerous medical heresy.

In conclusion, and with a view to escape the exceedingly gentlemanlike stigma of being a "petty dodger appearing under false address," I beg to subscribe myself,

Sir, your obedient servant,

Islington, Nov. 1851.

JOHN BROWN, M.D.

THE MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I trust you will oblige me by allowing me a small space in your journal, in order that I may correct an erroneous impression that may be made by what fell from some of the speakers at the Medical Society of London on the 3rd inst., as reported in THE LANCET of this day.

I observed that if an incision were made into the knee-joint, at the side, in a direction parallel to the long axis of the bones, the

virtual opening into the joint would be but small, whatever might be the length of the incision. Hereupon I was told that this only applied to healthy joints, and not to those which are distended by effusions. When speaking to a society of medical men established in practice, I do not conceive it necessary to enter into all that minute explanation of detail which I should use before a class of students. I suppose them to see a little way beyond what is actually said, and the speakers ought to have known that I am to the full as well acquainted with the state of a diseased joint as they are. But there is a tendency in all tissues of the body which have been unusually distended, to return to their normal size and situation as soon as the distending cause is removed, and this applies to even so rigid a structure as bone itself. If, therefore, a joint so bulged out has an incision practised in it, the capsular ligament will contract so as to shorten the dimensions of the incision; just as in the Cæsarian section, where a long incision being made in the womb to remove the child, will become a very short incision on the contraction of that organ.

I had a double motive for not affording this explanation on the occasion referred to:—first, I was unwilling to occupy any more of the time of the Society when so many others wished to speak; and secondly, I was undesirous of retorting in the uncourteous terms in which three of the speakers thought it proper to indulge towards me. Such is not my custom.

I remain, Sir, faithfully yours,

JOHN CHIPPENDALE.

New Cavendish-street, Portland-place, Nov. 22, 1851.

OPENING OF THE MEDICAL SESSION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Expecting that one of your Edinburgh correspondents would have furnished THE LANCET with some account of the opening of the university here, I refrained from writing last week; but seeing no one has done so, perhaps it is not too late to give you a short account of that event, especially as the demonstration of feeling and opinion has a significant bearing on that foulest of diseases that ever threatened to attack legitimate medicine,—viz., homœopathy.

Let me assure you that your appeal to the students in a recent number of the journal has not been unheeded. Many days previous to the opening of the university, considerable excitement prevailed amongst the students who had come into town, and the great question among us was, "What is to be done with the homœopathic quacks?" The force of your trite maxim, "empty benches make empty chairs," was duly appreciated; but you must allow me to remark that that measure is impracticable in this university at the present juncture. The great majority of gentlemen studying medicine here are sent thither by parents and guardians, without a choice of their alma mater, nevertheless of the knowledge of the lamentable state of affairs; and whilst it is an essential condition of graduation that the lectures on pathology be attended, they have no alternative. However, the feeling is as strong, and in many cases stronger, on this very account, for some, among whom I rank myself, fear that but a short time is required to render the degree from Edinburgh University a very questionable honour indeed, and one which the public, as well as the profession in general, may receive with suspicion.

Under such impressions the opening meeting was attended, and what occurred clearly proves how much homœopathic humbug and its quackish professors are hated. The several professors of the different faculties, as they entered the room, were cheered as usual, but when the professor of pathology showed face, the key of the music was entirely changed, and instead of cheers, there was nothing heard but groans and hisses, mingled with the cries of "Put him out! put him out!" A certain professor gave unmistakable signs of deep emotion, whilst the remainder gave abundant evidence that if they did not entirely approve of the proceedings, they quite understood what was meant by them.

Perhaps you may be able to explain why the professors of *materia medica* and midwifery were not present!

During the principal's address, reference was made to there having no vacancy occurred in the Senatus since last session, and how certain tokens of dissatisfaction were given; sufficient to say that a vacancy should have occurred. All present seemed to understand it. When the professors again retired, one by one, they were again applauded, and some of the favourites even named, but when the homœopathic pathologist came for his share, he was greeted with redoubled groans and cries until he was fairly out of hearing.

Next day, the introductory lectures were delivered, and all