

tion, and by five years desuetude almost unqualified for any exertion of thought, he commences the study of science, and ends his three years of baffled toil by a course with the grinder.

Does any one suppose that the student, in these three years, gets any but the most superficial knowledge of the greater part of his studies; and after conquering the more elementary parts, has he time enough to follow out, at the hospital, a patient course of clinical investigation?

It is, I believe, in the present day generally acknowledged, that for a liberal profession, a liberal education is required, one that embraces a respectable knowledge of the dead languages, with a mathematical training in the ordinary abstract sciences. The question asked—what is the use of Latin? what is the use of Greek? is found but in the mouth of fools, while numbers regret the early want of them. That knowledge is power, and that ignorance is not only weakness but misery, is daily becoming forced upon our minds. Is our profession, then, or by far the largest body of it, to be behind in the great race? Does not the vast field of investigation in medicine require well-prepared minds? Do not the public, again, require and prefer gentlemen of classical training? But what training does the young surgeon get? In what state is his education at the age of sixteen or seventeen, or at a time when more favoured ones are just entering the colleges? Barely enough, perhaps, to pass the miserable farce of his Latin examination at the Hall. And then the *five-years apprenticeship*! what does he learn in that time? The art of compounding medicines, a mystery which might be acquired in three months by any ordinary intellect. Now, I appeal to every one to bear witness to me if I speak not the truth in saying, that ninety-nine out of a hundred of our youths learn nothing but this during their five-years apprenticeship, and that, in the generality of cases, they are kept so closely to the pestle and mortar, that they have no opportunity for ever improving their minds, even by the desultory reading that an undirected mind falls back upon. Now this is the crying evil, that five precious years, in the seed-time of youth, should be thus sinfully sacrificed, by a law so disgraceful, that it at once presents itself stamped as a mixture of folly and fraud, upheld by the strength of avaricious interests. My consolation is, that it cannot last long; it is too preposterous. But the question is, how long? And this question I would peremptorily ask, in the name of the thousand injured youths who are yearly suffering from its baneful effects.

I remain, Sir, respectfully yours,

Euston Grove, 8th January, 1846.

DELTA.

THE TRANSLATION OF THE SECOND EDITION OF THE WORK OF M. LOUIS, BY DR. WALSH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you do me the favour to insert the following statement in one of your early numbers?

I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant,
W. H. WALSH, M.D.

London, January 12th, 1846.

Shortly after the Sydenham Society published my translation of the second edition of M. Louis' work on phthisis, a note appeared in THE LANCET from Dr. Cowan, complaining that a want of professional courtesy and candour had been exhibited towards himself in the omission of any reference to the fact of his having published a translation of the first edition of that work. The complaint was merely stated, and not distinctly addressed against M. Louis, the Council of the Sydenham Society, or myself. I had no reason to consider it pointed at me: Dr. Cowan had not, according to the received usages of society, made any communication to me privately, before uttering his charge publicly; nor, independently of this, was I conscious of having committed any breach of etiquette towards him. I consequently took no notice of the matter. But I have, by accident, just seen, in the last volume of the Provincial Transactions a restatement of the complaint; and in this restatement (although I am still without any private intimation from Dr. Cowan) I appear as the person against whom his charge is distinctly urged. Being unwilling that the readers of this journal should suppose me capable of discourtesy or want of candour towards any member of the profession, I conceive myself called upon to make a few brief observations upon the subject.

Dr. Cowan completely forgets, in his very unaccountable irritation, that I had nothing to do with the appearance of the book in question—that its publication was wholly the act of

the Council of the Sydenham Society. I, in truth, simply performed the humble labour of rendering the original into English for the uses and purposes of that Society. So far, indeed, was I from in any wise seeking to influence the Council in the selection of M. Louis' work for translation, or in any degree urging any of its members to appoint me as the translator, that the very first knowledge I ever had of the existence of the Society as an acting body, came to me through a letter, (received in Paris, in November, 1843, when on my way home from Italy,) containing an official request, on the part of the Council, that I should undertake the task of translating the volume. And, further, (I may be allowed, under existing circumstances, to add this,) far from being indecorously anxious to avail myself, to the detriment of Dr. Cowan or any other person, of any real or presumed advantages to be derived from the offer of the Society, I hesitated much to accept it, and should finally have declined it altogether, had I not desired to link myself by an additional tie to my former teacher, M. Louis.

And, may I now ask, what want of professional courtesy or candour did I display towards Dr. Cowan? Upon what notion, or upon what plea, (even if the thought of doing so had occurred to me, which I affirm positively it never in the remotest manner did occur,) was I to have undertaken to make it known, that he had produced an English version of the first edition? Had I published, on my own part, a translation of the second edition, and thereby impeded the circulation of Dr. Cowan's translation of the first, I should have felt an explanation due to him, and such explanation I should not have failed to tender. But had I, in the particular relationship in which I was placed with respect to the book, done this, the proceeding might, and probably would, have been construed into a censure of the conduct of the Council of the Society.

It may not be without its utility, for reasons not directly connected with the present statement, to mention that the first and second editions of the original treatise differ from each other so widely as to constitute almost wholly distinct works. In truth, not only does M. Louis himself say, in briefly recapitulating the changes and additions he has introduced in his last edition, "thus my first researches are *more than doubled in extent*," (Advertisement, p. xiv,) but the doctrines professed in regard of those most important subjects, Curability and Treatment, are almost diametrically opposed in the two volumes."

THE LAWLESS SECRET COMMITTEE.

WHO ARE TO BE THE NEXT DUPES?

THE following letter has just been circulated:—

"The National Association of General Practitioners in Medicine, Surgery, and Midwifery.

"Office, 294, Regent-street, Jan. 7, 1846.

"SIR,—I am requested to forward to you the following account of receipts and disbursements, and beg to direct your particular attention, at the present period, to the importance of carrying on the necessary negotiations with the Government, and of continuing the vigorous exertions so essential to the final settlement of Medical Reform, and the protection of the general practitioners,—in conformity with the following resolution:—

"That a circular letter be sent to each member of the Association, containing an account of the receipts and expenditure during the past year, and stating, that in order to meet the heavy expenses that will be incurred by the renewed labours of the Committee in maintaining the cause of the general practitioners, and carrying on the important question of Medical Reform during the next Session of Parliament, the enrolled members are respectfully called upon to contribute to the funds of the Association."

"The Committee have not hitherto deemed it requisite to press the members for donations to their funds, since the spontaneous contributions received during the last year were found sufficient to meet all necessary claims; but, having now arrived at the commencement of a new session, and finding that their labours must be continued with unabated vigour and watchfulness, they respectfully urge upon the members, and especially those who have not hitherto subscribed, the necessity of further contributions; and beg to express a hope, fully warranted by the efforts already made, that a willing disposition will be evinced to assist the Committee in the prosecution of their labours."

"The members of the Association are reminded that in the event of any new effort being made by the Government or the Colleges to pass a Bill that does not adequately sustain the interests of the general practitioners through the Houses of