

system (109 below the same average); 2706 from diseases of the respiratory organs (136 below ditto); 281 from diseases of the heart and large vessels (72 above ditto); 1132 from diseases of the stomach and digestive organs (119 above ditto); 66 from those of the urinary organs, 114 in childbirth and from uterine, &c., diseases, 77 from diseases of joints, and 17 from those of the cellular tissue, &c. (the average numbers being respectively 58, 102, 68, and 13). 1200 persons died from dropsy, cancer, debility, and diseases of unascertained seat, and 667 from natural decay (averages 1272 and 694); 335 from violence, privation, or intemperance, 33 from causes not stated (averages 298 and 66); and the total deaths for the quarter were 11,091, or 71 above the quarterly average for the five past summers. "In the metropolis, diarrhoea and dysentery have prevailed to rather an unusual extent, the deaths from the two diseases having been 572, which is 262 above the average. Small-pox proved fatal to 75 persons, and scarlatina to 543, which is 99 more than the quarterly average. Pulmonary diseases were less fatal than usual; fewer deaths were ascribed to convulsions; more to tabes mesenterica and to cancer.

"The barometer was higher than the summer average (its mean 29.961 inches); the temperature never rose so high as in the summers of 1841 and 1842; but the mean temperature, 64°.6, was higher than in 1842, and 2°.5 higher than the average of ten summers ending in 1840. The fall of rain was 5.662 inches, which is near the average, but it fell on only 23 days. The season has been fine and warm, the south and west winds prevailing."—*Reg. Gen. Report.*

## REMONSTRANCE

ADDRESSED TO

THE COUNCIL

OF

THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN  
LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS,

IN OCTOBER, 1843,

BY MR. MACILWAIN,

A MEMBER OF THE COLLEGE,

"PASSED OVER" BY THE COUNCIL

AT AN ELECTION INTO THAT BODY

IN JULY LAST.

*To the President and Council of the Royal  
College of Surgeons of England.*

GENTLEMEN,—Having, with some difficulty, at length ascertained that on the vacancy in the Council, consequent on the death of Sir Astley Cooper, you passed over, amongst others, my name, and elected a junior member, it appears to me that I should neither act justly to the science that

I profess, to the profession to which I belong, nor to myself, if I did not do all that an individual can do to resist such an aggression, viz., to record my protest against it, and the reasons on which it is founded.

In effecting this I would avoid any expression that is unfitting in an address to a public body. In venturing to arraign your proceedings I would discard everything which does not admit of proof. But if I think that you have violated the confidence which is reposed in you by Government,—that your acts rather represent those of a trading, than a scientific, community, and if one of these implies a personal neglect, nothing but a cowardice which I repudiate would excuse me from protesting against your injustice, or for repressing the language of complaint and expostulation.

Gentlemen, it is reported, and with too much appearance of truth, that the seats in your Council are reserved, as far as possible, for the surgeons of the London hospitals. If this be so, it is, in my view, an enormity of the most detestable character. Impossible, as it is, in an address of this kind, to unfold all its repulsive attributes, I will content myself with objecting,—first, that the positions in question are obtained, notoriously, by means which are altogether irrespective of professional or scientific merit; secondly, because it would be easy to show that, within the last twenty years, to no class of persons has science been less indebted than to the surgeons of the London hospitals, and this, even, were we to discard any allowance for the opportunities that they monopolise; thirdly, because in so restricting your selections for the Council you pass over men who, when they have wrought industriously, must have done so under comparatively disadvantageous circumstances, seldom enjoying equal facilities in collecting materials, scarcely ever equal opportunities of enunciating their results, and, therefore, men whom you ought especially to have encouraged, because it is not in the nature of things to suppose that a man will work under peculiar disadvantages, unless he be animated by more than an usual love of science; and, lastly, because, in such restrictions, you abuse the confidence which your Charter reposes in you, which by no latitude of construction can be said to empower you to maintain so odious a monopoly.

Unhappily, Gentlemen, and repulsive as it may be to me, I must now speak of myself; for as I would disclaim founding any pretensions on mere seniority, I must advance some of a more substantial character.

First, then, I submit that my early life was marked by labours at the hospital for an unusual number of years, and if not characterised by singular or unexampled, at least by very uncommon, industry; and this after my public and private occupations had

so increased that I might well have been excused from the additional labour of hospital attendance and inspection. This some of your own body can testify, as they can, also, Mr. Abernethy's notice of it.

I then held, for many years, institutions which I am prepared to show exacted greater responsibility than any of the hospitals, *as they are at present constituted*, whilst they required infinitely more labour, much greater nerve, and more varied talent and resources.

Before I had held any institution a year, I gave regular courses of clinical lectures, of which it is material to observe that they were delivered without remuneration, and also were the *first that ever were delivered in London*, a fact, which is alone, as it appears to me, worthy of more kind consideration by the College.

It was also at about this time that, in endeavouring to consolidate ophthalmic with general surgery, I succeeded, for the first time, I believe, in rendering operations for the eye a leading part of the operations of a general dispensary, performing, in the first ten months, twenty operations for cataract only.

From time to time I published such results of my inquiries as a reference to the wants of science, determined *by others*, suggested, and I contend that they are all positive additions, sometimes to the art, but more commonly to the science, of the profession.

The work on stricture adapted the various modes of treatment to their respective cases. The positions therein assumed have not, in any one instance, been shaken, whilst, so far as I know, the plan of the work was entirely new.

Finding that in the Truss Society, instituted for the relief of hernia, I became acquainted with a vast variety of other complaints, and that as a consequence of their having been mistaken by my professional brethren who sent them (often gentlemen of great eminence), I published the diagnoses of hernial and other tumours in the inguinal regions of the body, and I believe I say nothing but the truth when I assert that experience, and every test to which they have been subjected, has confirmed the truthfulness of such diagnoses.

At about this time, to a second edition of the book on stricture, I added remarks on the rectum and œsophagus, and a paper suggesting the earlier performance of tracheotomy in chronic laryngitis.

I also (as helping the downfall of local surgery) published on porrigo, in order to show that that class of cutaneous diseases which, while they were made to depend for their relief on local remedies, were most unmanageable, became, when properly treated, emphatic examples of the triumph of constitutional surgery.

I will now only allude to two of my other

works, namely, those "On the Unity of the Body" and "Medicine and Surgery One Inductive Science." In those works, besides pleading for a more inductive method of pathological investigation, and showing how it might be obtained, I have demonstrated the effects of a more sedulous study and record of phenomena, first in a practical application (in the improved constitutional treatment of diseases) of those phenomena of the nervous system a very small portion only of which is included in what is called *reflex action*; and, secondly, I have enunciated a generalisation which, whether you admit it to be a law, as stated, or an axiom in approximation thereto, I contend is the most important generalisation at present reached,—that in assigning places and uses to facts hitherto not at all understood, in eliciting the causes of our failure and success respectively, it does more to overthrow mischievous *dogmata* and to divest our medical surgery of its conjectural character, and mould it into the form of real science, than anything which had preceded it. All this, I submit, is proved, even on the imperfect induction of the first volume (the only one published), but I pledge myself to manifest that it will stand the largest induction which pathology affords; and, if the opportunity be allowed me, Gentlemen (*which it ought to have been ere this*), in the theatre of our College, I could mention many others; but those claims which I have stated, and which the *nature* of my address *obliges* me to bring forward, are sufficient for my present purpose. I am not insensible how small these and all others are, in an absolute sense, especially had I enjoyed either health or fitting *arenæ*; but, still, in their *relative aspect* (and in this view I shrink not from comparison with any of your own body), I must feel that if they had not entitled me to distinction, they should, at least, have shielded me from neglect. I have heard, indeed, that my endeavours to introduce a more inductive method into our pathological investigations is the very reason why I am unpopular amongst you; if so, I must be content to pay the price of your displeasure.

But, Gentlemen, if I have alleged that our pathological investigations present a series of violations of the principles of inductive philosophy,—if I have asserted that our collections of morbid anatomy would be more fittingly characterised as "cabinets of curiosities" than as representing the materials for philosophical generalisation,—if I have said that your records of cases omit many facts having obvious bearing on disease, and present inductions of phenomena so imperfect that they would scarcely be accepted in any other science,—if I have represented hospitals that can find funds for the building of schools, dissecting-rooms, even domiciles for students, and all the machinery of the trade of teaching, but which have neither found

sufficient sympathy for the afflicted, nor perceived the important bearings of such a provision as to found one single "House of Recovery," although it involves an agency which is recommended in *private* practice every day,—if I have represented these institutions as so far badly conducted; and, lastly,—if I have said that it would be little short of madness to expect medical science to advance whilst those means are neglected to which all other sciences have owed their progress,—who is there among you, Gentlemen, that will dare to deny these allegations? You have plenty of opportunity, if you will, and although that very public, to the enlightenment of whom no one seems more opposed than our collegiate bodies, is beginning to retaliate by believing anything and everything that is said against us, yet the age is not so dark but that an unfounded allegation may be easily disproved.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I would respectfully ask you, Is it possible that a retrospect of the last twenty years renders you so satisfied with the facts enunciated in your theatre as to feel that you have done wisely or profitably in restricting your choice of lecturers to those who had all their lives been addressing pupils? Or did it never occur to you that there might be men who could exemplify that the real study of the profession might be more auspiciously pursued when disincumbered of the trade of teaching? Look forth, I pray you, from the narrow precincts of the College, abroad into the profession; try some of the yet untried, and, therefore, at least not yet "found wanting;" and although you should begin with so humble an individual as he who now addresses you, *I pledge myself to show you simple exemplifications of improved modes of study, productive of fruits which are solid increments to our knowledge*, which, whilst they are in no way more valuable than in their application to practice, have been deduced from sources, and by modes, which not only those who study the physiological, but our brethren in other departments of science, shall allow to have been deduced through unquestionable channels and by means of strictly logical ratiocination.

I am not so inexperienced as to expect your sympathy, nor blind to the uselessness of expostulation unsupported by power. Yet have I this consolation, in common with all who have not paid any of you an apprentice fee (for you have rejected a surgeon of a hospital\* who had observed this formality), that each and all of us may consider that in the sacrifice of our just claims we have lent assistance to the overthrow of a system which, I believe, every unbiassed man regards as pernicious—as abhorrent to the interests of science—which lights up into an unextinguishable ignition, those heartburn-

ings and jealousies that are so disgraceful to a profession that, when properly pursued, is full of the most exalting tendencies,—a system which tends to repress the struggles of talent and the hopes of industry, and to deprive that single-mindedness and love of science (in no profession so valuable) of its legitimate reward,—a system which does no one thing to point out or smooth the path to real professional eminence, but rests on an early perception of mercantile dependancies that ought to be unknown, and as early a subscription, both of mind and purse, to a conventionalism, as great an abuse of power as it is of the dignity of our profession.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE MACILWAIN,  
Author of "Medicine and Surgery One Inductive Science," and other works; twenty years Surgeon to the Finsbury Dispensary, &c. &c. &c.

#### MEDICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

Monday, Nov. 6, 1843.

Mr. PILCHER, President.

#### CASE OF LARGE POLYPUS OF THE WOMB DETECTED DURING PARTURITION.

MR. CRISP exhibited a morbid specimen, of which he related the following particulars:—The patient was a lady, thirty-six years of age, and pregnant Aug. 14, 1843, with her sixth child. She had been delivered of her fifth child, by an easy and natural labour, nineteen months previously; she had since miscarried, and had previously done so in 1840, and twice before that period. During the last month or six weeks of the present pregnancy she had been subject to frequent small discharges of blood from the uterus, but had not been prevented from attending to her usual domestic duties. The liquor amnii was discharged a few minutes before Mr. Crisp's arrival, with a small quantity of blood. On examination the os uteri was found dilated to the size of half a crown-piece. The presentation could not be detected, but was supposed to be placental. The next day she was better, but fancied she should not recover. On the 16th Mr. Crisp was summoned in haste, and found the child had been expelled three or four minutes before he reached the house. She had been in labour only a few hours, the pains being severe only the last half hour. On placing the hand over the uterus he fancied he felt a second child, but soon altered his opinion, as the uterus appeared contracted. The placenta was retained, and at the end of three-quarters of an hour he introduced his hand, and removed it from its attachment near the fundus. He felt, on withdrawing his hand, a soft substance like a child enclosed in its membranes, and endeavoured to peel away from the side of the

\* Mr. Lloyd, of St. Bartholomew's.