

do these things would be indeed making progress backwards, instead of following the onward movement of civilization. Much more might be easily advanced, and cogent arguments stated regarding the noxious custom here denounced, but it seems superfluous. We therefore conclude our remarks by saying, in the classical language of CAMDEN—a great opponent to the use of tobacco,—that the habit of smoking this weed may so seriously affect the physical and mental constitution of man, as to cause "*Anglorum corpora in barbarorum naturam degenerare.*"

It is high time that the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England should set about remedying the fruits of the great laxity which has prevailed in its dealings with homœopathy. If the Council suffer homœopaths to parade the College title without hindrance, this body will find very little support or sympathy from the profession in their contemplated reforms. From what we learn of the tone of the profession, it would afford more general satisfaction if the Council were to deal summarily with its homœopaths, than if it were to gain the new Charter they have set their hearts upon. What is the use of College titles and College privileges, if they are to be rendered valueless by being shared with knaves and fools. Everywhere the homœopaths boast that their system of humbug is sanctioned by the Royal College of Surgeons, and such practically seems to be near the truth. What can Mr. GREEN, with his high ethical notions of the dignity of medical studies and the medical calling, be about? Surely he and his brethren cannot much longer permit the gross prostitution of the title of the College to purposes of fraud and quackery.

With respect to a homœopath lately admitted, will the Council of the College merely repeat their inane conduct on the occasion of admitting the homœopathic pastrycook? Will they simply cry out, they have no power to take away a diploma once conferred? If they remain quiet and submissive to quackery under this new insult, they will add largely to the responsibility they already bear for allowing quackery to come to a greater head in this country than it has ever before reached, either in this or any other place in the world. But we cannot believe that such supineness will continue. At all events, we shall persist in our exposures of the College backslidings; and we are sure the thousands connected with the College, by membership or fellowship, are pretty nearly unanimous in their opinions as to what should be done with the homœopathic fellows and members of the College of Surgeons of England.

THERE will be found reprinted at page 46 the chief part of the trial in which the "Gresham Life Assurance Company" figured last week at Westminster. The facts of this action bear very significantly upon some of the important points upon which the assurance companies and the medical profession are at issue.

In the infamous pamphlet to which we alluded a few weeks ago, written by an Actuary, and at the discussions which have taken place at the Institute of Actuaries, it has of late been declared that medical examinations and medical evidence are of very little value in the processes of life assurance. Do the directors of the *Gresham* think so after their trial? Must not this now notorious case have opened their eyes a little?

Another fallacy which has been broached is, that the opinion of the medical attendant of the assurer is of little value as compared with the important and carefully conducted examinations conducted by the medical officer of the company. Yet here was a case in which that officer was completely at fault, and failed to detect long-standing gastric, pulmonary, and vesical disease. The companies declare that the testimony tendered by the medical attendant of the proposer is always a service rendered by the medical man to the assurer, and not to the office, and that therefore it should be paid for, if paid for at all, not by the companies, but by the proposer. In such cases as that of GILES CLEMENT, who derives the benefit from the medical opinion? If the *Gresham* had asked Mr. GILL's opinion, who would have received the benefit? The office? or the proposer?

We have that faith in the spirit of the profession, that we do not believe its members will consent to be reviled as persons whose opinions are of no value to the exalted functions of actuaries and directors, and not only to be bullied, but to be cheated and belied. Every note that we have seen from an assurance office, refusing the payment of medical fees, has contained palpable falsehood. We do not believe that after this, medical men will consent to be put in witness-boxes, and to give evidence, such as that which came from Mr. SETH GILL, to save the treasury of assurance offices. If the directors of the *Gresham* had honestly paid Mr. GILL for that valuable information which they extracted from him at the trial, no doubt unwillingly on his part, they would not have been placed in the humiliating position of resisting the fulfilment of a contract which, to save a medical fee, they had run into, in blind, wilful, and culpable ignorance.

HOMŒOPATHY AT BRIGHTON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having just been made aware that in the last number of your journal, a copy of a letter of mine to Mr. Lawrence, of Brighton, has been published, with a note from that gentleman, containing the following words: "occasioned by my refusing to consult with Dr. Malan, Homœopathic M.D.," I request that you will, in your next number, publish the following refutation of the misstatements therein contained:—

1st. I cannot be said to be a homœopathic M.D., as I was an M.D., and a doctor of surgery and midwifery, years before I became thoroughly acquainted with homœopathy, or practised that much-improved system of medicine.

2nd. I am not aware that Mr. Lawrence was ever asked to consult with me; I certainly was never asked to consult with him, nor had I ever the intention of so doing; and the friend of the patient who took me to Brighton to attend his relative, never hinted such a thing. Mr. Lawrence seems to have totally misunderstood his wishes. I should not, however, have deemed it necessary to trouble myself to write to him had this alone been the case; but Mr. Lawrence having, on my entering the room, used, unprovoked, very ungentlemanly and offending epithets against myself, a complete stranger to him, and repeatedly expressed that "it was *infra dig.*" for him to meet in consultation with me, I judged it right to acquaint him with facts concerning homœopathy of which he seemed totally ignorant, and also to inform him, that, unfortunately for his dignity, his expression of "*infra dig.*" was greatly misapplied. I regret that the correctness of my views of the case was not agreeable to Mr. Lawrence, and also that I should be obliged to point out two misstatements in three lines of his writing.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

H. V. MALAN, M.A. (Tubingen,) M.D. (ditto.)
Great Cumberland-street, July 1851.

* * * A rather good specimen of homœopathic impertinence. Our readers will be puzzled to detect the misstatements the "homœopathic M.D." would make out. His "titular trivialities" do not seem to sit easily upon him.—ED. L.