

PETITIONS FOR MEDICAL REFORM.

THE number of petitions praying for changes in the laws relating to medicine, presented to the House of Commons, during the present Session, up to the 26th of June, 1840, amounts to 130, and the signatures attached, to 4321; a great increase since our last notice on this subject. Amongst them were petitions

From Manchester, presented by Mr. Mark Philips, M.P.—From Drogheda, by Sir Wm. Somerville.—From St. Asaph, by Sir Stephen Glynne.—From Carrickfergus.—From St. Margaret's and St. John's, Westminster, from Exmouth, and from the Medical Association of Ireland, by Mr. French.—From Mr. Robert Murray and others, and from the County of Monaghan Association, by Mr. Lucas.—From Antrim, by Mr. Gibson Craig.—From Ballycastle.—From the Stirling Medical Association, by Colonel Abercromby.—From Londonderry.—From London, by Mr. Mackinnon.—From Market-hill, by Lord Acheson.—From Holywood, from Ballymena, and from Larne, by Mr. Irving.—From Penrith, by Major Aglionby.—From South Shields, by Mr. Ingham.—From Lurgan, from Comber, from Brentford, and from Broughton-Ferry, by Mr. Warburton.—From Wicklow, by Mr. Grattan.—From Limerick, and from Tiverton, by Lord Palmerston.—From the Clackmanan and Kinross-shire Assoc, by Admiral Adam.—From Renfrew, by Mr. Houston.—From Presteign, and from Reading, by Serg. Talfourd.—From Whitehaven, by Mr. M. Attwood.—From Devonport and Stonehouse, by Sir George Grey.—From Abroath, by Mr. Chalmers.—From Lonsdale, by Mr. Wilson Patten.—From Nottingham.—From Liskeard, by Mr. Charles Buller.—From the Medical Society of Dundee, by Mr. Fox Maule.—From Great Driffield, by Lord Hotham.—From Beverley, by Mr. Hogg.—From St. Marylebone, by Lord Teignmouth.—From St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, by Mr. Leader. (The two last petitions contained, together, the signatures of 139 medical gentlemen.)—From Paisley, by Mr. Hastie.—From Welshpool, by Sir John Edwards.—From Bridgnorth, from Carlisle, from Polperro, from Alythe, from Wexford, from Stowmarket, and from Edinburgh, by Mr. Wakley.—From Lambeth, by Mr. Duncombe.—From Durham, by Lord Dungannon.—From Newmarket, by Mr. Eaton.—From Halifax, by Mr. C. Wood.—From Andover, and from Hexham, by Mr. Blackett.—From Kilkenny, and from Marsham, by Mr. Hume.—From Whitby, by Mr. Chapman.—From Cork, from Kilrush, and from Newcastle-on-Tyne, by Mr. Ord.—From Teignmouth, by Sir Chas. Grey.—From Berehaven, by Mr. Beamish.—From Tavistock, by Mr. Rundle.—From Gates-

head, by Mr. Hutt.—From Berwick-on-Tweed, by Mr. R. Hodgson.—From the Eastern Association of Scotland, by Sir H. Parnell.—From Sunderland, and from Kingston-on-Hull, by Mr. Broadley.—From the Kidderminster, Bewdley, and Stourport Medical Book Society, by Sir Thomas Winnington.—From the Glasgow Association, and from the Glasgow Faculty of Medicine, by Mr. Dennistoun.—From the Cork Eastern Society, by Mr. W. O'Brien.—From St. Pancras (182 signatures), and from one of the Northern districts of London, by Mr. Hawes (62 signatures).—From the North of England Association, by Lord Howick.—From the Wexford Association, from the Armagh Association, from Parsonstown, and from Ennis, by Mr. C. O'Brien.—From the North Tipperary Medical Union.—From the Edinburgh College of Surgeons; and from Roscrea.

Those petitions, the members presenting which are not mentioned above, were forgotten to be countersigned with the names of the M.P.'s, previously to handing them to the clerk of the House. The information under that head is therefore not now obtainable. The presentation of these petitions has not been accompanied by any objection to the prayers, in any one instance, on the part of the members to whose care in the House of Commons they have been confided.

THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION IN SHREWSBURY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I this day send you the "Salopian Journal," July 1, containing an account of the annual meeting of the "Shropshire and North Wales Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, held June 25th, at Shrewsbury. The managing parties refused to admit any reporter excepting from the above paper, which is the local organ of a party. I am surprised that such a high-minded and liberal gentleman as Mr. W. Clement, of Shrewsbury, could countenance such a proceeding by his presence. The reporter for the "Shrewsbury News," the best conducted and most talented paper in the county, was not only refused admission to the meeting, but grossly insulted also. Your obedient servant,

NEMO.

Salop, July 2, 1840.

* * * As NEMO has not authenticated the above statement, we may hope that it is incorrect, though the parties really could have gained nothing by an increase of the reports of a meeting whose chief characteristic was the exchange of eulogies between the com-

pany,—probably the “great design” of the assembly. Respecting the “parent” association and its “founder,” Dr. JEFFREYS thus occupied attention :—

“I believe its increase, its prosperity, and its success is quite unprecedented, in the rise and progress of any such a body of men upon record, and which has mainly been effected by that one individual, whose presence at this meeting was fully expected, and which I am confident would have been the case had not some very pressing and urgent necessity prevented it. The duties of his office are of that nature, and so extensive, that I do not know the person in existence who would, or perhaps could, so efficaciously carry them into effect, and who has handed his name down to posterity in a manner which entitles him to exclaim with the poet,

‘Exegi monumentum ære perennius.’

And I may with truth also add,

‘Hic et ubique terrarum.’—(Cheers.)”

The Legislature may except Shropshire from any mention in its enactments against quackery. The President, Mr. RICE WYNN, in his address, thus justifies that exemption :

“There is another subject which has attracted my attention, but I confess I have not hitherto found time to consider it fully and fairly in all its bearings,—I allude to quackery. Empiricism, in some of the northern and other counties, is tolerated, it is true, and countenanced to an overwhelming extent, by those who probably on all occasions adopt profession, and not principle. But in this, our immediate neighbourhood, Gentlemen, I have the satisfaction of being able to say, that we know very little comparatively of any serious injury which it inflicts either on the members of the medical profession or on the community, and I feel prepared to account for the cause of our happy exemption. Gentlemen, for a longer period than the last half-century, our profession has had one at its head to whose experience and example it might safely look for guidance—a gentleman distinguished for his devotedness to his profession, as to his success in it—a gentleman whose extraordinary talent in the discrimination of diseases, and ability in the treatment of them, and whose undeviating moral integrity and fidelity of purpose have raised him to a just pre eminence, who, himself incapable of the slightest dereliction of duty, would never allow it, in another, to escape the rebuke of honest and manly indignation. Gentlemen, I need not say that it is to Dr. Darwin we are mainly, if not entirely, indebted for our prosperity and respectability. (Applause.) As practitioners we have, I hope, humbly endeavoured to imitate his bright example, and have shared his success. And to the younger branches of our much envied, though laborious and anxious

profession, I would beg to be allowed to say ‘Go and do likewise.’ (Cheers.)

“In reply to a remark from Dr. J. P. Johnson, as to the expediency of publishing an analysis of patent medicines,

“Dr. HASTINGS said, that the subject of quackery, as well as that of medical reform, had been touched upon at the last general meeting, at Shrewsbury. They had petitioned the Legislature in favour of medical reform, and though some time must elapse before the bill could be brought forward, Mr. Warburton was pledged to it. (Applause.) On the subject of quackery, it had been agreed to, on the suggestion of Dr. Barlow, that the Committee’s further steps should be suspended until after the Southampton meeting.

“Mr. BROOKES, of Wenlock, said, that he wished to bring before the Association the treatment which Dr. Johnson and Mr. Keate had last year received from the Salop Infirmary Directors.

“The Society declined entering into any discussion relative to Mr. Keate, Dr. Johnson, and the Salop Infirmary ; and it was communicated by Mr. Brookes that Dr. Johnson and Mr. Keate had withdrawn their request for its introduction.”

High compliments were paid by the President to a deceased practitioner of the town :—

“In conclusion, I beg to trespass a little longer only on your attention and time, while I offer to you a brief, though very inadequate tribute and testimony to the memory of our most deeply-lamented late associate, townsman, and friend, Mr. Sutton. I was in constant intercourse with him from the very commencement of his earliest career of public usefulness. He was ever distinguished by his simplicity and probity of character, his mildness and suavity of manners, his great and acknowledged practical skill, his entire devotedness to the harassing and arduous duties of his profession, and the alleviation of suffering and distress. In private life he was universally beloved for his amiable and social qualities and disposition. Gentlemen, Mr. Sutton’s memory will meet with its enduring reward. (Applause.)”

Dr. HASTINGS, in the course of his address, speaking of the achievements of the Parent Association, said—

“It had drawn attention to the subject of vaccination, and hence had arisen the Bill for preventing indiscriminate inoculation, although he thought it an error to have placed in the hands of the Poor-Law Commissioners what should be done by the National Vaccine Board. (Cheers.) The Association had also established a Benevolent Society, from which the best consequences must flow. Their uniting had enabled them to do what an individual could scarcely have

attempted: it had enabled them to enrich the new volume of their 'Transactions' with the beautiful plates of Mr. Ceely, at the cost of £700,—coloured plates, which illustrated his proof that small-pox and cow-pock were the same,—a fact in medical science obtained by a series of deductive experiments and proofs unsurpassed by any thing since those of Jenner. (Great applause.) It was the funds of the Association which enabled this discovery thus to be made public, and the 'Vis unita fortior,' collecting guineas from many, raised a sum which few individuals could spare."

Dr. JEFFREYS made reference, during the business of the meeting, to

"An article of the *Materia Medica*, very little known in this country, but one of great and general use in South America. This herb he exhibited at the meeting of the Association in Liverpool, July 24, 1839. It is a styptic of great power and efficacy, and is called 'Yerba Soldado,' or the Soldier's Herb, from its astringent property being accidentally discovered by stopping the bleeding vessel of a wounded soldier in the field of battle. It was also called *Matico*. Dr. Kenrick, of Warrington, applied a little of it to an artery, which was divided by a gentleman who attempted suicide by cutting his throat, and it stopped the hæmorrhage instantly. An order for an ample supply had, by an accident, not yet arrived in this country, but it was expected by every vessel from Valparaiso which may come to Liverpool: and when it was received, he would take care that the Association should know where such supplies may be obtained. It is no less efficacious as a styptic for internal, as for external hæmorrhage, given in form of decoction and infusion."

The meeting was commenced, as it would seem, in private, which might account for the exclusion of any reporter but one who could be under the controul of the managers. The "Salopian Journal" says it was attended by

"Between forty and fifty members, who assembled on the invitation of Rice Wynne, Esq., President of the Branch, at the College, his residence. He had invited several of the gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood to meet them at a splendid *déjeuné à la fourchette*, which was set out in the temporary room formerly belonging to the late Mr. Cressett Pelham, M.P. This room was erected in the garden, and the entertainment did the amplest credit to the proverbial hospitality of Mr. Wynne."

Shortly after the toast of the "Visitors and Clergy" had been drunk,

"The visitors retired, and it was agreed that the business of the meeting might be more conveniently transacted without the

members removing to the Lion, as named in the public advertisements. We may add that, during the transaction of business, there was a total cessation from the social pleasures of the table.

"Shortly after six o'clock, about thirty-two gentlemen sat down to dinner at the Lion. The chair was taken by Dr. Parker, supported by Dr. Hastings and Dr. Jeffreys, and Mr. W. Clement performed the duties of Vice-Chairman."

It may be mentioned, for the information of the governing bodies in all the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and all the Apothecaries' Halls, in the United Kingdom, that "the Queen" and all the loyal toasts were drunk; that "the Association" was drunk; that "Dr. Jeffreys" was drunk; that "Dr. Hastings" was drunk; that "Dr. Darwin," "Dr. Parker," "Mr. W. Clement," "Mr. Wynne," "the Guests," "the Secretaries," were all "drunk," twice over, at breakfast and at dinner, with cheers and heartiness; but that the poor colleges and corporations, those institutions at one time invariably glorified by bacchanalian cheers of nine-times-nine duration, were, not one of them, morning or evening, drunk the least in the world.

Dr. PARKER left the chair at nine o'clock; but the enjoyment of the evening was continued for a few hours longer.

MEETING OF MEDICAL MEN AT NEWTON.

SMALL-POX AND VACCINATION.

MEMBERS of the medical profession from Liverpool, Manchester, Wigan, Leigh, Warrington, and other towns in Lancashire, attended a meeting of the Newton Branch of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association, at the Leigh Arms Hotel, Newton-in-the-Willows, on Thursday fortnight. Dr. JEFFREYS, of Liverpool, presided. The report of the Council, read by the secretary, Mr. HARDY, adverted to the urgent demands, which had every where prevailed, for medical reform; and congratulated the members on the unanimous determination which prevailed in the profession, to induce the Legislature to grant to them just laws and equal privileges. Reference was also made to the Bills before the House of Commons for "extending vaccination" and abating small-pox; but as the statements contained in the report in the "Manchester Courier" (June 25), would argue but a very poor un-