

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

WE have been requested by Dr. Ballard and Mr. Henry Thompson to publish the following circular :—

“Some misapprehension appears to exist in certain quarters as to the objects and sentiments of those graduates who have recently taken an active part in ascertaining and asserting the rights of themselves and of their fellow-graduates, in the matter of electing a representative to the Medical Council.

Having officiated as secretaries to the public meeting of November 17th, at No. 5, Cavendish-square, we have been brought into communication (in most cases by letter), with more than one hundred of the medical graduates in town and country, and have, therefore, been able to ascertain the general feeling in respect of the question at issue. At the request of many, and in obedience to our own conviction, we think it desirable to state what appear to be the sentiments of the very large majority of those with and for whom we have hitherto acted.

1. It is almost unanimously regarded as a point of the first importance to ascertain with whom the right of election to the Medical Council on behalf of the University really lies—whether with the Senate exclusively, or with the whole Corporation as constituted by the Charter.

This vital question can only be settled by an appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench, the highest legal authority in the matter; and the only method of raising it is by the issue of an information in the nature of a writ of *quo warranto* against Dr. Storrar, for which a rule *nisi* was obtained on the last day of Michaelmas Term (Nov. 25.)

Let it be remarked that no personal question is here involved; no personal feeling is manifested or can be gratified by the proceeding. It is a matter between the Senate and the graduates at large. Had the representative selected been one against whom no word of objection had ever been uttered, it would have been equally the duty of the graduates to assert their right (if it exists) to the exercise of an important function. It is a question wholly of principle, not of person. Further, we believe there is a general conviction, in which we unhesitatingly participate, that the Senate intended by this election to act conformably to the wishes of the graduates, respecting which, however, there can be no doubt that it had been seriously misinformed.

2. Certain objections have been made to Dr. Storrar, as a representative of the University in the Medical Council, on the ground that he is not the most fitting man to hold that position.

On this question it is sufficient to make the following statement:—Seventy-five graduates, amongst whom are many of the most distinguished members of the Faculty of Medicine, have forcibly stated in writing their convictions to this effect, and have signed a copy of the resolution expressing them with a view to its being laid before the Senate; while a considerable number who have not signed this document, have given adhesion to the sentiments which it expresses. The fact that Dr. Storrar does not represent a very large and important portion of that faculty is now indisputable. Personally, and on behalf of our associates, we most emphatically disavow any objection to Dr. Storrar, except such as exist on purely public grounds. The duty of making a protest against his election has been to us an unpleasant and painful one, the more so that we are aware how zealously he co-operated with the original graduates' committee in promoting the objects for which it was organized. But while according him all the credit he may claim for these services, we maintain that they confer on him no title to represent the interests of our profession in the National Medical Council.

An effort has been made to identify this movement with a section of the graduates who belong to the College of Physicians. A complete reply to this utterly unfounded allegation is the fact, that of the seventy-five medical graduates who have recorded their signatures, a large majority are not members of that body. Nothing can be more irrelevant to the question at issue than its complication with this subject. We are at a loss to understand how good service can arise to any cause by attempts to perpetuate party jealousies between the various sections of our profession.

EDWARD BALLARD, M.D.
HENRY THOMPSON, F.R.C.S., M.B.

November 30th, 1858.”

Correspondence.

“Audi alteram partem.”

THE MEDICAL GRADUATES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE MEDICAL COUNCIL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In common with my fellow-graduates, I have received an address signed “John Storrar, M.D.,” which is so specious and so full of inaccuracies that I feel called on to make a few observations in reply.

Dr. Storrar states that he was selected to represent the University of London on the Medical Council because it was known that he “had for several years taken a deep interest in the education and social organization of the profession.” The profession has gone on in happy ignorance of this fact, and will probably continue to do so, if no other evidence of the fact be given than Dr. Storrar's statement. Were it correct, some proof would be available. Instead of offering such proof, Dr. Storrar commences a history of medico-political agitation by an assertion that a distinguished provincial graduate was blackballed in 1854, at the Medico-Chirurgical Society, by the fellows of the College of Physicians, because he had no other qualification than his M.D. degree. This assertion is unsupported by a particle of evidence, and is contradicted by the fact that a large proportion of those elected as fellows of that Society do not possess any other qualification than the degree of M.D. The assertion is evidently made with the view of obtaining the sympathy of provincial graduates. Guided by the like feeling, Dr. Storrar states that the opposition to his own election is the result of a feeling which originates with graduates who belong to the College of Physicians. Fortunately, the point here alluded to is of recent date, and susceptible of proof or disproof. The resolution passed at the medical graduates' meeting—stating “that this appointment is calculated in every way to alienate from the University the respect both of its graduates in medicine and of the medical profession at large”—has been signed by graduates who do not belong to the College, in the proportion of nearly two to one to those who are members of that body. It is as vain to attempt to conceal the real cause of the graduates' objection to the appointment, as it is unworthy and unbecoming to promote and to perpetuate dissensions between sections of the graduates or classes in the profession. Dr. Storrar refers with satisfaction to the Act of Parliament which places the medical graduates of the London University on a footing with those of Oxford and Cambridge. Surely, Dr. Storrar does not mean to claim the credit of obtaining this Act, whilst we remember with thankfulness the share which Dr. Barnes and many other graduates, both legal and medical, had in contributing to this result. More prominently still does he claim credit for having assisted in passing the Medical Act of last session. With the credit for this, if any, must go the responsibility. £30,000 are thereby taken from the pockets of the profession. Quacks are left untouched. The graduates of all Universities, the highest and the lowest, are placed on one level. Time will show whether this will be for good or evil—whether the necessarily expensive London schools and its University can compete with cheap and less efficient education in the sister countries, or whether Dr. Storrar's patriotic zeal will be rewarded by seeing flocks of young Englanders crossing the Tweed and restoring the lost *prestige* of the northern Universities.

Dr. Storrar boasts of having been one of the chairmen of the graduates' committee for ten years. He conceals the fact that the medical graduates had long ceased to take any active part in the proceedings of the committee. They retired, worn out by the everlasting talk to which they were compelled to listen, disgusted by the selfishness and illiberality which they heard inculcated. One gentleman, besides Dr. Storrar, alone remained, and he has since taken a most active part in the present movement. The graduates' committee pride themselves on having obtained Convocation; but they conceal the fact that Mr. Warburton, as long ago as 1840, took steps in the Senate for securing this privilege for the graduates. They do not tell us that subsequently that gentleman became the opponent of the measure. He did so because the want of judgment and illiberality of Dr. Storrar and his associates excited his fears for the welfare of the institution. The real truth is, then, that Con-