

REMUNERATION TO MEDICAL REFERREES.

ALTHOUGH we have distinctly avowed our determination not to admit any original article into the pages of this Journal unsupported by the name of its author, yet we do not conceive ourselves to be debarred from making use of communications so addressed to other publications; and we have less scruple in doing so when such communications contain matter of general information and interest to our professional readers. We copy in this number the substance of a letter addressed to the *Patriot* newspaper, inasmuch as it treats of a subject of considerable importance to the members of our profession—a subject which has been frequently discussed hitherto, with but scanty success as to the end sought for.

To the Medical practitioners in Upper Canada:

BRETHREN,—Notwithstanding there are many subjects which ought to be taken up and discussed amongst us, relative to the position we occupy in this country—a position, I regret to say, which places us very far below the rank which we hold in Great Britain—there is one which I am induced to bring under your notice at present, as the longer our determination is postponed, the more difficult we shall find in regaining what we never ought to have lost.

The subject of Life Assurance is beginning to assume in this Province, an importance which it has long had in Great Britain, as we may perceive by the numerous Companies, both English, Colonial, and American, which are now becoming candidates for public patronage. You are all aware that the applicant is directed to furnish the name of his "ordinary medical attendant;" and to this "medical attendant" the Company forwards a series of questions relative to the health, constitution, habits, &c., of the applicant, together with "any other circumstance which it is important should be made known to the Company"—and they often further enquire the opinion of the "medical attendant" as to the eligibility of the applicant for assurance. You are also told very gravely, that your communication will be regarded as *strictly confidential*.

Every medical gentleman of ordinary attainments must be aware that to answer most of the questions satisfactorily, requires a large amount of patience, labour and accuracy.

We meet with several cases, in which a *comparatively* slight examination shews us distinctly that the applicant is really in good health, and of some of our patients whom we are in the habit of seeing frequently, we may have little hesitation in pronouncing a favorable opinion. Even in these cases the careful and accurate exploration of the lungs and heart, by the stethoscope and other means, involves much time and attention,—but where we come to *doubtful* cases, (as for instance where in a nervous habit an increased action of the heart and accelerated respiration are brought on by the mere anticipation of the examination,) a second or even a third examination may become necessary,—and one of these examinations cannot be gone through in less than from three-quarters of an hour to an hour and a half,—when we reflect on the time thus occupied, and in arranging the information we may thus obtain, so as to give it in that systematic, careful, and intelligible form which every educated "medical attendant" feels due to himself, we ought not to be supposed to be *grasping* or *avaricious* if we expect some remuneration for our trouble.

It will be allowed that these observations are thoroughly applicable to all