

to be licentiates, and who constitute a large and increasing majority of mere empirics; and, on the other, the swarm of illiterate patent medicine doctors; there is certainly little cause to congratulate the profession, on having secured that efficiency and respectability, contemplated by the legislative acts of incorporation.

The real cause why medicine occupies a position so low, is, that it possesses no scientific basis. Had chemistry received that attention and support which have been accorded to anatomy and physiology, the result which is so much to be regretted could not, in all probability, have occurred; for the study of organic chemistry must, in that case, have become a necessity; and must have been prosecuted with a success equal, at least, to that which has been attained in the field of surgery. What organic chemistry is accomplishing now, would have been achieved before. There is no doubt whatever, that the backward state of medicine has been caused entirely, by its neglect of organic chemistry. Important as surgery must ever continue to be, as one branch of the healing art, it is incapable of rendering any service, either to promote or retard the change of the tissues, or even to modify the nature of a secretion. And with respect to pharmacy, when, by the application of an intended medicinal agent, a secretion becomes changed, the collateral effects produced are not appreciable; are therefore not perceived; and may, in all likelihood, be more injurious ultimately to the patient, than if the original disorder which it was intended to remove, had been allowed to continue.

The importance of organic chemistry is now, however, fully admitted by the leading physicians both in Europe and America. Wherever a disinclination has been shown to make an open and candid avowal of its necessity, the reason may be easily traced, to the apparent difficulty, of incorporating a new system with an old established practice. On this head, however, there exists a good deal of misapprehension. The advice of Mr. Wakely and others, to medical students, given without qualification, has had some share in exciting this feeling. As far back as 1844, during the publication of Liebig's lectures in the *Lancet*, Mr. Wakely recommended in very impressive terms, the importance of organic chemistry to medicine; but, apparently, not perceiving the facility with which the results of the new discoveries, in chemistry, could be used by the old practitioners, his advice was directed exclusively to young students. Such advice, without qualification, was virtually to ostracise the whole existing body of practitioners. In this sense, it seems to have been received; and, notwithstanding that no demurrer was ostensibly