

Advertiser June 18th 1886

DEAN RUSSELL AND THE VIGILANCE ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I am sorry and surprised that men who desire to be just and truthful in their expressions do not make sure that what they are stating is correct before they help to give circulation to it. The late good dean was one of the most active promoters and workers on the committee of the Vigilance Association, and also vice-president. And now, sir, please let me bring before the notice of all moral people the case of Susan Fularton, which was before the Police Court yesterday (the half of the revolting case is wisely not reported), which is only one out of very many of a similar character, and I ask shall we allow this traffic in young girls to be continued without lifting up a determined stand against it. The Vigilance Association is formed to help to check this moral pestilence which so largely exists in our midst, and will not you moral men of South Australia come to the help?—I am, &c.,
MATTHEW GOODE.

June 17, 1886.

PROFESSOR BOULGER IN REPLY.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—I do not doubt Mr. Turnbull's statements. He is right in saying that I was not as intimately acquainted with the late Dean Russell as many others, and if the word *intimate* be used in the strictest sense he is, perhaps, right in saying that I did not know the dean intimately at all. I did know him well enough to speak to him freely about grave social and religious problems. Such conversations left upon my mind an impression which I endeavored to convey in my remarks at the last meeting of the Shakespeare Society. I regret extremely having indiscreetly—and as Mr. Turnbull has shown inaccurately—referred to matters having no connection with the Shakespeare Society. My sole apology is that man liveth not morally by vigilance committees alone, and that knowing how highly the late dean appreciated other ways of improving his fellow-men, and not knowing that he was what Mr. Turnbull calls "a vigilant," I ignorantly implied his disapprobation of a system of *espionnage*.—I am, &c.,

E. VAUGHAN BOULGER.

June 17, 1886.

Advertiser July 3rd 1886

UNQUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Mr. Smyth's challenge to the medical profession is a very safe one, for he knows perfectly well that neither of the Universities he names, nor indeed any corporate body of respectable standing, would for a moment entertain the idea of granting such a test examination as he proposes. Since, however, he is so well up in medical and surgical lore, and, moreover, seems to have the means withal, why does he not enter for one of the regular examinations, and by qualifying himself remove the opprobrium which justly attaches itself to those who say on their own authority that they are skilled in medicine? What guarantee have the public that a death occurring under such treatment is not murder through ignorance?—I am, &c.,

CHEMICUS.

Advertiser July 2nd 1886.

UNQUALIFIED PRACTITIONERS.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—In your notice of the medical deputation that waited on the Premier on Friday last, Dr. Stirling is reported to have said that "what the deputation asked was that unqualified practitioners should not be allowed to prefix the title of 'doctor' to their name, to which only those on the roll were legally entitled." Now I think it must be evident to almost any of your readers that the above sentence is not only vague and indefinite, but also as inaccurate, unfounded, and self-stultifying as it is possible for any statement to be. Everybody knows that there are persons in this country whose names are not "on the roll" whose right to use the title "doctor" is indisputable; and everybody knows, too, that by far the greater number "on the roll" have no more right to the title "doctor" or any other university distinction than the poor old screws they rush about with; and surely everybody must see that if it were true that "only those" on the roll are legally entitled to style themselves "doctor" there would be no need for an Act of Parliament to prevent other people from doing so. The deputation contended that if a man practised medicine without a diploma it ought to be notified; but I fancy they do not need to be told that in such cases the nearest "qualified" practitioners take pretty good care that the fact at least shall be very well known to all whom it may concern. They pretend that their object is to protect the public, but it is curious, to say the least of it, that the only members of the community to ask for such protection are just those who cannot possibly need it. It is quite evident they want protection for themselves, and I suppose they would not howl unless they were hurt. But if a "qualified" practitioner cannot hold his own against his "unqualified" neighbor his qualification can't be worth much, and I fear he is scarcely worth protecting. They coolly assume that every one "on the roll" is qualified, and that nobody else is; whereas, if they know anything at all they must know that there are many excellent physicians and surgeons "unregistered," and on the other hand, that there are at least some "on the roll" who have no qualification whatever, physical, mental, or moral, for the profession they pretend to practice except a "diploma." If it could be shown that a medical diploma was really a certificate of the ability and skill of the holder I believe that every honest man would say at once "let us make sure that nobody shall practice medicine without one," but the truth is, it is not so, any more than a degree in arts or divinity is a guarantee of the holder's ability as a teacher or preacher. No man can be more anxious than I am that the public should be well protected from all sorts of quacks and every form of quackery. But I do think, and I have heard men far more eminent in the profession than the very foremost member of the deputation say that there is quite as much quackery in the profession as out of it, and quite as many quacks "on the roll" as off it. The fifty "unqualified practitioners" of whose existence the deputation complains, and whom I suppose it would

like to exterminate, may be all ignorant and stupid quacks for anything I know, more ignorant and stupid even than any of the "qualified men" I have come across, but if they were I fancy that they would be soon found out, and that they would gain but a lean living among such a small population as ours. For my own part, though I am called "unqualified," I think am so far qualified by attainments and experience, that I can safely challenge Dr. Stirling or any member of the deputation introduced by him to a competitive examination in every department of medicine and surgery, and I now do so without hesitation, the conditions to be as follows:—1, that the papers be set by the examiners to the University of London, or the University of Ireland; 2, that they be transmitted in separate batches under the seal of the university to somebody in Adelaide, say the Minister of Education, or the Inspector-General, and opened by him from day to day as required in our presence; 3, that the answers as soon as finished be at once sealed and forwarded direct to the examiners from day to day; 4, that the answers shall bear no name nor signature, but shall be simply numbered, for the purpose of identification after the result shall be declared; 5, that I shall give security for the payment of all expenses incurred; and 6, that in case I do not prove fairly successful I shall hand over not less than £20 to the Adelaide Hospital or Medical School. I may add that whatever other people may do I have never concealed the fact that I am not registered, but, on the contrary, I have distinctly said so to every person in any way concerned. And, moreover, I do not call myself "doctor," though I believe I have at least as good a right to do so as my "qualified" neighbors. I am reluctant to cumber your space with these nearly personal matters, but I am on my defence, and I think I have a right to be heard.—I am, &c.,

T. E. SMYTH.

Waterloo, June 28, 1886.
