FOREIGN DEGREES AND THE BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The enormous issues involved in the passing of the new Medical Bill must be my excuse for troubling you again. Since my letter appeared in your last week's issue I have been inundated with letters from foreign graduates, calling upon me, as President of the Foreign Graduates' Association, to take some decided step in the matter. May I state, Sir, through your columns that the Lord President of the Council has been already communicated with, and has promised to give the matter his attention. It has been asked by some whether saving Clause 70 in Part VIII. does not protect foreign graduates from prosecution for using their properly acquired titles, but as I read it, Sir, this Clause will not affect foreign degrees at all; and if Part IV. 28 (?) remains part of the new Bill a gross injustice to foreign graduates must inevitably result. The matter might easily be set at rest, and a large body of honourable, and in many cases eminent, practitioners satisfied if such an additional saving clause as the following were inserted in Part VIII.: "Nothing in this Act shall prevent any person who, on December 31st, 1884, is a registered medical practitioner, from using and registering the title of a degree or diploma in medicine or surgery, or both combined, obtained after examination at a foreign or colonial university, providing that such degree or diploma had been obtained before the said date of December 31st, 1884."

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Sheffield, April 2nd, 1883.

H. J. HARDWICKE, M.D.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue of last week there appears a letter from Dr. Hardwicke relating to the future position of foreign graduates in medicine, should the new Bill become law as it now stands. As a M.D. Brussels, and doubly qualified and registered medical practitioner, I am, of course, deeply interested in the matter and really hope that you will use your great influence on behalf of those who, like myself, have, through circumstances entirely beyond our control, been compelled to take the M.D., after having been some years in practice. Most of us who have taken foreign degrees, have done so not because the examinations are easy, for this is certainly not the case at Brussels, as my fellow graduates can testify, but because all the British Universities in some way or other, such as requiring residence for a year or two, or the exact age of forty years, have effectually prevented practitioners in active and general practice from obtaining these degrees. Moreover, the reason why the M.D. in Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, and Holland does not confer the right to practise in the respective countries is not because the examination is defective, but merely because it is the law of the land that a state examination alone qualifies to practice. Taking this into consideration, together with the fact that American, French, Austrian, Italian, and Spanish degrees will be entitled to registration, I sincerely trust you will help us to obtain a recognition and place in the forthcoming Medical Register.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

J. REYNOLDS, M.D. Brussels, L.R.C.P., &c.

Coldharbour-lane, April 4th, 1883.

HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE ISOLATION OF THE SICK FROM ZYMOTIC DISEASES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The disappointing results of placebo legislation become every day more apparent, and it is greatly to be regretted that we have not more medical men of ability and experience in the House of Commons, although we must be thankful for the few who are already there. There are numerous social and sanitary questions constantly coming to the front which render authoritative medical testimony of the greatest importance. Such men as Dr. Andrew Clark and Dr. Richardson would be of inestimable value in the House. I believe by their eloquence and high professional standing they would at once command the ear of our legislators.

During the last thirteen years we have had several serious epidemics of scarlet fever in this town and neighbourhood, but there have been no means of isolation; consequently many young lives have been sacrificed which otherwise, humanly speaking, might have been saved. Dr. Angus Mackintosh, medical officer of health for our rural district, in his excellent annual report, just published, says: "Further legislation is absolutely necessary, and without it the labour of sanitary authorities and their officers will to some extent be unavailing, ineffectual, and useless. Legislation with respect to hospital accommodation for the isolation of the sick from zymotic diseases should be made compulsory. Generally speaking, Section 131 of the Public Health Act, 1875, has not been carried out, consequently the necessary accommodation has not been provided, and the want of it in a great many localities and districts where isolation cannot be otherwise secured is much felt. In the houses occupied by the labouring classes in this country the requisite convenience cannot be provided, and attempts to do so have invariably proved miserable failures. Isolation, in its proper meaning, must be such as to prevent atmospheric communication inside houses between the sick and the healthy, otherwise the particles of contagion and infection will float about apartments according to the currents, and be inhaled by the inhabitants."

Boards of guardians and sanitary authorities are often guilty of most unwise and injudicious parsimony. Keeping down the rates is, no doubt, important, but the saving of human life is infinitely more so. In this part of the country they have systematically refused to comply with the suggestions of the urban and rural medical officers of health, as far as regards building hospitals for the proper isolation of the sick from zymotic diseases.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Chesterfield, March 19th, 1883.

JOHN ROSE, M.D.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

(From our own Correspondent.)

"THE LANCET'S" SANITARY REPORT ON SUNDERLAND.

YOUR report on the sanitary condition of Sunderland has been reported *in extenso* in the Sunderland and Newcastle papers, and, what is of more consequence, it is likely to produce good sanitary fruits, judging from the leaders and comments upon it. On all hands we hear that the "House of Recovery" is condemned, and must soon disappear, but at present it is in the possession of small-pox. The *Sunderland Daily Herald and Post*, which has long taken a clear and intelligent view of the backward sanitary condition of the place, and that against much opposition in the Town Council chamber, while acknowledging that the sanitary broom has been set briskly at work since your Commission was appointed, says that, at Sunderland, abuses die hard, and seem there to have "as many lives as a cat." It is felt that the authorities have sadly overweighted the painstaking and hard working medical officer of health, Mr. A. E. Harris, by placing upon him many extraneous duties; so that it may be said that they almost kill their medical officer on the principle, I suppose, *pour encourager les autres*. I hear that a meeting of the profession is likely to be held soon, to take the fever hospital matter, and other questions affecting the profession and health of the town, into consideration.

THE NEWCASTLE INFIRMARY.

I hear that important organic changes as regards the working of the infirmary are under the consideration of the governors, and I should not be surprised to see it thrown open as a free hospital before very long, with cases admitted on their merits, and the "letter" system abolished. At Sunderland the Infirmary has been worked on the free system for several years, to the satisfaction of the profession and patients, while that the public have taken a warmer interest in its free working is evinced by its improved financial position now as compared with its former state.

SCARLET FEVER AT MORPETH.

At a meeting held last week, the Mayor presiding, attention was called to the prevalence of scarlet fever in the town, and after a conference with the medical officer of health on the matter, it was resolved to recommend all teachers of public schools to keep them closed for another week.