nut-shell dimensions, and that after spelling through musty records, and translating half-obliterated charters, it simply resolves itself into this important fact—that the charter of King's College and University, *specially* expresses the authority of the "Senatus Academicus" to confer various degrees, while the charter of Marischal College and University only does so *generally*, as appertaining to a University.—I am, &c.

London, Sept. 1852.

A. T. CHALMERS.

OCCLUSION OF THE OS UTERI.

[NOTE FROM DR. POWER.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Whitworth, in his communication to your journal on Saturday, September 4th, has probably approximated to an explanation of Dr. Highmore's case of "occlusion of the os uteri," although the assumed principle of anteversion is in itself a supposition which requires further demonstration. The case in question admits of being referred to one of the sources of suspended labour so lately advocated by myself (see THE LANCET, July 24th, 1852, p. 80), as dependent on an oblique position of the os uteri, and which may generally be regarded, not as the results of any accidental displacement of the body of the uterus itself, but of an original and permanent constitution of the organ, and hence the delay in the commencement of the labour has been repeated in the same patient. There is also some reason to regard this constitutional state as hereditary, inasmuch as some women suffer from it whose mothers had experienced apparently similar protraction in the early stages of their labours. In Dr. Highmore's case, I deem it probable that the os uteri was, on the principle described, turned obliquely backwards towards the promontory of the sacrum, so that the child's head pressed or gravitated downwards in the true axis of the pelvis, and formed a bulging tumour, protruding forwards more or less on the anterior parietes of the body of the uterus, so as to render it difficult with the finger to reach the os tincæ. The proper exciting stimulus being thus taken off from the uterine orifice, the parturient action would be imperfectly elicited, and the early stage of the labour rendered tedious and inefficient; the os uteri would, however, in time, begin to dilate, and become more and more central; and in proportion as this takes place, the official irritation becomes more and more decided, and the action vigorous, eventually terminating the labour rapidly, as in Dr. Highmore's case.

Under such circumstances, I have always succeeded in finding the os uteri, so as to be able to stimulate it and draw it into a more central position; and this with the effect of producing vigorous action and a rapid termination of the case.—I am, Sir, yours truly,

ennett-street, Sept. 1852.

JOHN POWER.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND LIFE ASSURANCE OFFICES.

WEST OF ENGLAND ASSURANCE COMPANY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—About the 4th of June last, I received a communication from the Secretary of the West of England Insurance Company, Exeter, enclosing the usual inquiries respecting a gentleman whom I attended professionally, and whose life had been proposed for insurance in the above office. The gentleman referred to resided ten miles from me; and as I could not reply to the questions satisfactorily without a personal interview, I visited him for the express purpose, answered the questions, and returned them to the secretary, politely requesting a fee of one guinea for my trouble. A month having elapsed without any notice being taken of my note, I addressed a few lines to the secretary, reminding him of my former application,

In his reply of July 5, he states that he regrets he cannot pay me a fee on behalf of the office, as it is not their custom, but refers me to the proposers of the insurance, enclosing their names and addresses. I immediately answered this by saying, that as I had no communication whatever with any other party but himself, (the secretary of the company,) I must still consider that I was employed by the office, and that I could not think of applying to the proposers, who are perfect strangers to me; indeed, that I was of opinion that they, as well as my patient, would deem it a breach of confidence on the part of the office, in acquainting me with the circumstances, and that I must decline for the future filling up any printed forms without a suitable fee being enclosed. I also reminded him that I had been paid by their office, in two cases, under precisely similar circumstances, not many months before. This was again treated with silence, but on the 12th of August I received from the same office the

usual series of inquiries for the insurance of the life of another patient of mine.

I acknowledged the receipt of their favour, but referred their secretary to my former correspondence for the reasons why I could not return the form properly filled up.

I heard no more from the office, but accidentally learnt that their agents in this town had received instructions authorizing them to employ some other medical man to examine my patient, and pay him a fee on behalf of the company, as "they do not choose to be dictated to by any medical man."

It must be obvious, that without the evidence of the *usual* medical attendant, the returns must be very incomplete; and, however it may satisfy the present officials, the insurer who expects bonuses will find it prejudicial in the long run.

I think this subject requires no further comment on my part; I leave to you, Mr. Editor, and my professional brethren generally, to judge of the matter.

Would it not be advisable to republish a list of insurance offices who recognise the services of medical men?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Sturminster-Newton, Dorset,
Sept. 1852.

JOHN GOOD, M.R.C.S. & L.A.C.

CLOSURE OF THE RANELAGH SEWER.

THE following statement regarding the Ranelagh sewer, signed by thirty-eight medical practitioners, has been forwarded to the Committee of the St. Paul and St. Barnabas Dispensary:—

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the undersigned medical practitioners resident in Pimlico and Chelsea, having reason to believe that cholera will shortly make its appearance in our large towns, deem it our duty to recommend such means as experience has shown to be most successful in preventing its ravages.

"In the Report of the General Board of Health, July, 1849, it is stated, page 79, that, 'the attacks of cholera are uniformly found to be most frequent and virulent in low-lying districts, on the banks of rivers, in the neighbourhood of *sewer-mouths*, &c.' and we are of opinion that open sewers are very prejudicial to health, as well as dangerous, in consequence of the accidents which occur from drowning.

"Permit us therefore respectfully to call your attention to the open condition of the Ranelagh sewer, which bounds, on one side, the district of the St. Paul and St. Barnabas Dispensary, and to hope that you will employ your utmost endeavour to remove the nuisance.

(Signed.)

"C. J. B. ALDIS, M.D., 1, Chester-terrace, Chester-square.

WILLIAM FOLWELL, M.R.C.S., 58, Upper Ebury-street.

JOHN PERRY, F.R.C.S., 4, Eaton-square.

CHARLES WHITING, M.R.C.S., 58, Upper Ebury-street.

W. BATTEN, L.S.A., 74, Westbourne-street.

JOHN PARR SCATLIFF, Surgeon, 47, Sloane-square.

JOHN HALL, Surgeon, 47, Sloane-square.

W. M. NEALE, Surgeon, 18, Westbourne-pl., Eaton-sq.

ROBERT SYNNOT, M.D., Surgeon, 16, Eaton-terrace.

EDWARD WEBB, M.R.C.S., Elizabeth-street, Eaton-sq.

H. P. BANISTER, M.R.C.S., 65, Colchill-street.

G. A. MANTELL, LL.D., F.R.S., Chester-square.

W. P. JORDEN, M.R.C.S., 14, Lower Belgrave-street.

D. N. FRAMPTON, 28, Lower Belgrave-street.

J. W. MOREY, M.R.C.S. Edin., L.A.C., 67, Up. Ebury-st.

J. E. W. ROGERS, M.R.C.S., L.A.C., 96, Hugh-street.

W. C. MEATES, 41, Chester-square.

J. S. MACKINTOSH, Surgeon, 8, Wilton-place.

ALFRED LEGGATT, 13, William-street.

EDWARD SEATON, 33, Sloane-street.

JAMES TEEVAN, Surgeon, &c., 30, Chesham-street.

GEORGE C. JONSON, 1, Grosvenor-st. West, Eaton-sq.

JOHN INCE, M.R.C.S., 3, Lower-Grosvenor-place.

GEORGE VINCENT, M.R.C.S., 109, Sloane-street.

HENRY JAY, 50, Sloane-street.

WILLIAM DICKINSON, 37, Sloane-street.

ALFRED FORD, Surgeon, Ebury street.

P. J. MURPHY, 112, Sloane-street.

MARTINDALE WARD, M.R.C.S., 140, Sloane-street.

S. J. BOULTER, M.R.C.S., 16, King's-road East.

JOHN COATES, M.R.C.S., King's-road East.

FREDERICK GASKELL, M.R.C.S., Markham-square.

A. B. BARNES, M.R.C.S., King's-road.

GEORGE RAMBONE, F.R.C.S., King's-road.

M. W. SANNEMANN, M.R.C.S., 15, Cheyne-walk.

JOHN WILKINSON, Surgeon, Oakley-square.

CHARLES SIMPSON, M.D., 5, Eccleston-street South.

EDWARD DAVIS, M.R.C.S., &c., Upper Belgrave-place."