striking and pleasing instance amongst many of the great advantage it may be to an intelligent but probably not very industrious student to be obliged to return to his studies, stimulated by bitter knowledge of his deficiencies and an earnest desire to supply them. This gentleman fully deserved the place he obtained.

I can but shortly refer to Dr. Rennie's unfounded statements with respect to the results of the examination. As before said, one of these is that the army medical service is now supplied with an inferior class of men. As his acquaintance with the comparative merits of the majority—in fact, it may be said of all but a very few—of those who have passed the examination must necessarily have been extremely limited or absolutely *nil*, it is a matter of surprise, and I should hope now to himself of regret, that he should have ventured to cast such a baseless imputation upon his junior brethren. Whether true or false, he cannot have had sufficient means of judging, and is wholly unjustified therefore in throwing it out.

During the agitation for the improvement of the service, it was too much the custom for attempts to be made to disparage the young men entering it, but against such attempts it is impossible to protest too strongly. I have had considerable opportunities of judging, and venture to assert with the utmost confidence that there is no reason whatever to suppose, but entirely the contrary, that the gentlemen who have entered the service through the portals of Chelsea are in any respect, professional or otherwise, one whit inferior to those who have gained admission in the old hap-hazard way. In fact, as regards professional attainments, from their having undergone an additional test, which some have failed to pass, the probability of their being by no means, at any rate, inferior professionally, is much enhanced. I am convinced, also, that amongst these men several might be pointed out in all respects fitted to compete for eminence with the most distinguished of their predecessors in the service, when afforded the opportunity.

Dr. Rennie is further of opinion, as may be gathered from the following curious sentence, that if the examination were done away with, "the army would become a prize for the best of students, and be relieved from the *approbation* which of late has *begun* to be attached to it in the medical periodicals of being a place of refuge for the 'sweepings of the medical schools.'" It is to be hoped that this beginning will not be followed up; and I think few will be found to concur with Dr. Rennie in the opinion that the system of competitive examination for entry into the service should be abolished. It is the only possible one at the present day, and, whatever may be its drawbacks, there can be no doubt that it is extremely beneficial, and but just to the profession.

In conclusion, I would fain express a hope that Dr. Rennie may perceive that, in penning his strictures upon the Chelsea and Netley examinations, and in his remarks upon the merits of the candidates of the present day compared with those of his own, he has been very imperfectly informed. In fact, a moment's consideration must convince him that the knowledge of the young men, whose gossip he quotes, must, with respect to some of their statements, have been projected from their own consciousness.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Harley-street, May 1st, 1867.

GEO. BUSK.

THE TREATMENT OF WHOOPING-COUGH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The report on whooping-cough in your last issue shows how conflicting are the opinions held, and how widely different is the treatment pursued at the various metropolitan hospitals. Thus the disease is pronounced irremediable at St. George's; readily curable with nitric acid at the Westminster; amenable to treatment at King's College, though the nitric acid is not there found to be of much use. Meanwhile the Registrar-General reports that the deaths in London last week, from whooping-cough alone, amounted to 44.

In THE LANCET of May 25th, 1861, I published the result of a long series of observations on this disease, detailing at length the *rationale* of the treatment I had been led to adopt, and the precise purpose and meaning with which the remedies were administered.

In THE LANCET of June 20th, 1863, Dr. Wildbore gave emphatic testimony to the success which attended his observance of the method of investigation and system of treatment advised in my communication.

I may add that I have continuously employed this plan of

treatment, both in public and private practice, in cases of whooping-cough; that no instance of death has occurred to my knowledge; and that the ordinary duration of an uncomplicated case is three weeks from the commencement of the treatment.

This encouraging result must form my justification for venturing to direct the attention of your readers to the views expressed in 1861.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

London, May 1st, 1867.

HENRY G. WRIGHT.

LIGATURING OF ARTERIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue of the 19th January of this year I see announced a "Novel method of dealing with ligatures applied to arteries." You refer to the plan adopted by Mr. Campbell De Morgan, Middlesex Hospital, of "passing ligatures, by means of a needle, through the skin close to where they are tied."

There is no reason for doubting that this is an original idea of the gentleman above named; but that it is not a new idea may be seen by referring to Charles Bell's "Illustrations of the capital Operations of Surgery," part iv., Aneurism, p. 88, where, after a description of the mode of ligaturing the femoral artery, he states: "I have passed the remaining end of the ligature through the eye of a needle, and then drawn it through the skin, a little removed from the edge of the wound; but this is not an essential part of the operation."*

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

Bangalore, East Indies, Feb. 20th, 1867.

W. FARQUHAR, M.D.,
Madras Army.

THE MEDICAL ACT AND ITS DEFECTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Several of your correspondents have of late pointed out some of the deficiencies of the Medical Act, and it is to be hoped before the amended form has been made a Government measure due attention will be given by the General Council to the numerous grievances which weigh so seriously on the entire body of the profession.

Allow me, Sir, to draw your attention to one of them which particularly affects the general practitioner. I cannot do better than cite a typical case: many such, I feel assured, have come under the notice of my professional brethren as well as myself.

A practitioner after some ten or twelve years of arduous duty seeks some honorific distinction with a view of improving his professional status. He accordingly makes an application at one of the British universities to be admitted a candidate for the degree of M.D., but he is quickly informed, much to his surprise perhaps, that a twelvemonths' residence at the university is a *sine quâ non* to its attainment. As the applicant cannot, of course, relinquish his practice for so long a period, this most unreasonable requirement of the Medical Act is tantamount to a positive refusal to admit those to the degree who are from their position most deserving of the honour. What is the consequence? The practitioner may now probably obtain the L.R.C.P. Lond., an excellent qualification it cannot be denied; but his object is not hereby attained. He is not a M.D., nor can he styled *de jure* "Dr.," notwithstanding he is *de facto* a physician. Perplexed and annoyed by the anomalies and unjustness of the existing law, the practitioner, determined to attain his object, has no remedy but to apply at one of the Continental universities, where, after passing a good practical examination, he is at length promoted to the Doctorate of Medicine. Congratulating himself that he has now in a certain manner surmounted the difficulty, he is doomed to experience another disappointment; for on making application to register his degree, he is told no such qualification obtained after the year 1858 is admitted by the Council.

Now, Sir, I think it is high time that the body of general practitioners should strongly protest against this as well as the other injustices of the Medical Act. Why is it the doors of our universities are practically closed to them? And why, I may also ask, is the degree of M.D., acquired after a searching

* "It leaves less of a foreign body in the wound, it allows the lips of the original incision to unite altogether, and diminishes the chance of much blood being suddenly lost in the event of secondary hæmorrhage."

examination at a Continental university of high repute, considered unworthy of a place in our Register? I am aware that ten practitioners are admitted under certain restrictions once a year at the University of St. Andrews; but this is a very meagre and ungenerous method of dealing with the question, and scarcely deserves a comment. I would propose that the General Medical Council institute twice a year a special examination of a thoroughly practical nature for the degree of M.D., which should be open to all registered general practitioners possessing the double qualification who have been in practice for not less than ten years. Their fitness to become candidates may be guaranteed by the joint recommendation of three graduates. Let the test be sufficiently searching, and for the honour of a degree thus obtained I am persuaded there would be many aspirants.

To strike effectually, however, at the root of the evil we must ere long, I believe, base all legislation referring to this and similar subjects on the broad principles of the "one-faculty" system so ably expounded in your valuable journal.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

April, 1867.

SPERO MELIORA.

EDINBURGH.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE University meeting for conferring degrees in all the faculties, except that of medicine, is held between the closing of the winter and the opening of the summer session. The ceremony on this occasion possessed a more than usually interesting character from the number of those who were capped, and from the variety of degrees conferred. First, the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on four distinguished clergymen; then the degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred, amidst loud applause, on a distinguished member of the profession, James Hutcheson Stirling. In presenting that gentleman to the vice-chancellor, Professor Muirhead observed that Mr. Stirling "has attained for himself a high position, and has shown that Scotland is not without men who will support her credit in the department of metaphysical inquiry, for which our country has long been so highly distinguished among the nations of Europe." As the expounder of the secret of Hegel, Mr. Stirling has contributed a most valuable addition to metaphysical literature. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and for several years has been resident in this city, and though not now engaged in the active duties of his profession, was formerly in practice in Wales. He has not come prominently forward as a writer on medical subjects, but he is the author of a short but excellent treatise on Cholera, which was published some years ago, in which he gives a good description of that disease as it occurred in his practice in Wales, his views of its pathology, and an account of his treatment of it. This little work shows him as the acute practitioner and the observant scientific inquirer, and, although now recognised as one of the distinguished metaphysicians of the age, establishes the fact that the mental philosopher and the practical man need not necessarily be disjoined. The degree of Doctor of Natural Science was given to two gentlemen, that of Doctor of Science to one. There were nine candidates for the honour of Bachelor of Divinity, and one for that of Bachelor of Laws. The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on nine gentlemen, and that of Bachelor of Natural Sciences on three. The address on this occasion was delivered by Prof. Sellar.

The thorough vaccination of the people is a matter of the greatest importance, but, from the difficulty in at all times keeping up a supply of lymph, practitioners in distant parts of the country may be unable to vaccinate so regularly as is desirable. The Vaccination Act for Scotland, whilst making it obligatory that all children be vaccinated, save in exceptional cases, before the age of six months, made no provision for the necessary supply of matter, and there was no institution in Scotland whose office it was to supply lymph, although in several of our large cities the children of the poor were vaccinated at the dispensaries. In Edinburgh the Royal Dispensary, though bearing the title of Vaccine Institution, was only intended for the gratuitous vaccination of the children of the poor. Dr. Husband, the energetic vaccinator of that institution, supplied so far as he could the demands made on it by the country and other practitioners, and from this source the revenue of the dispensary was increased yearly by several pounds. Under the stricter working of the law, an authorised central

depôt for lymph was found to be a necessity, and I understand the Board of Supervision have taken up the matter, and that a central dépôt in Edinburgh, with, of course, Dr. Husband for its director, is to be established. The full particulars have not yet been made public, but it is said that there are to be auxiliary dépôts in other large towns. Under the director alluded to there can be no doubt of the success of this scheme, if the terms for the purchase and supply of lymph are sufficiently liberal.

Edinburgh, May 1st, 1867.

PARIS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

THE death of Jobert de Lamballe has been the most notable medical event in this place during the last fortnight, and, though a brief notice of the career of this eminent surgeon has already appeared in your columns, you will perhaps allow me to devote this letter to the memory of the deceased. The high position which he occupied, his eminent abilities, his many scientific titles, and the peculiar nature of his character and the circumstances of his life, which made Jobert one of the most striking and interesting figures in French contemporary surgery, will perhaps justify me in reverting to his history.

In 1820, Jobert, who was then only eighteen, left his native place in Brittany and came to Paris to commence his medical studies. He had as yet received but a very imperfect education. His father had died, leaving his mother in straitened circumstances, and Jobert would have been precluded from entering on a liberal career had he not met with a friend in the person of the curate of Lamballe, who engaged to furnish him with the means of pursuing his medical studies in Paris. Jobert set to work with admirable zeal and perseverance, and his efforts were soon crowned with success. The very next year following his arrival in Paris he was named a house-surgeon, or *interne*, by competition. He then lived with such parsimonious frugality that out of the modest sum of 1200*f.* which he annually received from his benefactor in Brittany he managed to send some assistance to his mother. Four years afterwards, on the completion of his *internat*, Jobert suddenly found himself in a most critical position. His benefactor died, and with him vanished the only resources of Jobert. The young student gave himself up to the deepest despair. Utter poverty stared him in the face, and, worst of all, he found himself obliged to renounce his profession, and the hopes of attaining those higher grades for which he had been strenuously labouring during the last ten years. Fortunately for him, and, it may be added, for the cause of science, Providence again rescued him. Through Richerand's influence he obtained gratuitously both board and lodgings at the Hôpital St. Louis, and he could once more devote his whole time and energy to his favourite studies. In 1827 Jobert was named by competition prosecutor of the Faculty; in 1828 he obtained his diploma, and on this occasion wrote a remarkable thesis on the subject of "Hæmorrhoids"; in 1829 he gained the position of surgeon to the Paris hospitals, and in 1830 that of deputy professor of the Faculty. His fame as a surgeon was now beginning to extend; he soon got into considerable practice, and some time afterwards was named, together with Dupuytren, consulting surgeon to Louis Philippe. In 1840 he became a member of the Academy of Medicine; and after the accession of the Emperor he rose rapidly to the very highest grades of his profession, and was named professor of the School of Medicine, a member of the Institute, a commander of the Legion of Honour, and surgeon ordinary to the Emperor.

His abilities as a surgeon were great and varied. He was a skilful and daring operator. His rapidity of diagnostication was something wonderful, and even laid him open to the reproach of rashness; but he rarely committed a mistake. His self-possession remained undisturbed during the most lengthy operations, and his ingenuity supplied him with ready means to meet any supervening difficulty, and enabled him to strike out in a new line. His bold spirit led him to attempt many startling innovations, which he would justify afterwards by demonstrating that they were founded on sound anatomical and physiological principles. Thus it was that he tied the carotid in a case of enormous tumour of the orbit, and that he fearlessly carried the hot iron to the uterus. It may be added that he attached considerable importance to the subsequent