Secondly.—That Fellows of the College practising midwifery shall be eligible to the Council, but Fellows engaged in the practice of pharmacy shall thereby be disqualified.

Thirdly.—That Fellows residing in the provinces shall be eligible to the Council, but that two-thirds, at the least, of that body, shall be resident in London.

Fourthly.—That in the election of the Council, the Fellows shall have the privilege of voting by proxy.

Fifthly.—That after the grant of the charter, the admission to the Fellowship shall be by examination only; and every candidate shall have previously been admitted a member of the College.

Sixthly.—That the Council of the College shall be empowered by charter to appoint examiners in all the departments of medical and surgical science; and that the board so constituted shall be formed independently of, or conjointly with, the examiners of the Royal College of Physicians, or the University of London. I have the honour to be, your obedient servant.

(Signed) W. WATSON BEEVER, Chairman.

Manchester, Jan. 11, 1850.

HEADS OF A BILL FOR MEDICAL REFORM.

BY JAMES SYME, ESQ., F.R.C.S.E.

1. THERE shall be established a council, to be called the "Medical Council," and to be charged with regulating the education for general medical practice.

2. The council shall consist of twelve members of the medical profession, appointed by her Majesty, with advice of her Majesty's privy council—six being resident in England, three in Scotland, and three in Ireland.

3. The members of the council shall continue in office during her Majesty's pleasure, and in the event of vacancies occurring, shall have their places supplied as originally.

4. The council shall choose one of their number for chairman, preferring the senior in case of an equality of votes; and shall also appoint a general secretary, with local secretaries for Scotland and Ireland.

5. The members of the council shall be remunerated for their loss of time and travelling expenses; and the secretaries shall receive salaries, to be regulated by government.

6. The medical council, within a specified period, shall determine, (1.) The amount of preliminary study to be required before the commencement of professional education; (2.) The period of medical study to be required from candidates; (3.) The courses of lectures or other exercises necessary for their education; (4.) The schools of medicine and surgery to be recognised as affording the necessary qualification; and, (5.) The lowest age at which the licence for general practice should be given.

7. The medical council, within a specified period, shall sanction or constitute in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, examining boards from the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, the Societies of Apothecaries in London and Dublin, and the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons in Glasgow, for bestowing the licence of general practice.

8. The examiners shall be appointed by the different bodies on whose part they act, and shall conduct their proceedings in conformity with regulations sanctioned or established by the council.

9. The members of the council shall be empowered to be present at, and also to inspect the records of, examinations for the licence of general practice.

10. The council shall make an equitable arrangement for the division of fees paid for the licence thus conferred, between the different bodies represented in the boards of examiners.

11. The council shall annually publish a list of practitioners qualified under the act, together with those actually engaged in practice previously to its enactment, with a qualification from at least one of the legally recognised bodies, setting forth the degrees, diplomas, or other honorary distinctions they may have acquired.

12. All the persons thus registered shall have the free right of practising physic, surgery, and obstetrics, with or without the dispensing of drugs, in any part of her Majesty's dominions.

13. The council shall be empowered to erase from the register the names of persons judicially convicted of felonious acts.

14. There shall be penalties exacted by summary process for assuming without due authority any title contained in the register, and also for engaging in medical or surgical practice without a licence.

15. All previous acts, and parts of acts, inconsistent with the above-mentioned provisions, shall be repealed.

16. The expense incurred by the medical council shall be defrayed from fees paid for registration.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE ASSURANCE OFFICES AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Should you consider the publication of the accompanying statement would have any beneficial tendency pending the long agitated question of remuneration for professional services rendered to life assurance companies, perhaps you would kindly afford it a corner in your valuable journal.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

St. Anne's-street, Salisbury, Sept. 18, 1849.

H. RICHARDSON.

On the 30th of August last I received a letter from the Secretary to the "Scottish Union Assurance Company," requesting me to answer certain queries respecting the health of Mr. — of —. To this letter I replied in the following terms:—

"SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th inst., with its appended form. You request me to answer certain queries respecting the health of Mr. — of —. I shall be happy to afford you the information you require, on receiving the usual fee. I think it right to state, that in applying for a fee prior to complying with your request, I am not actuated by any mercenary motive, but simply upholding a principle.

"I am, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"H. RICHARDSON."

"The Secretary, Scottish Union Assurance Company."

Up to this time I have received no reply to my communication, and have consequently advised my patient to insure in the "Westminster and General Life Assurance Association." I must here state, that Mr. — offered himself to pay my fee if I would reply to the queries sent me by the office of his own selection. This I declined, informing him that my refusal was not on account of the fee, but with a view to compel the pertinacious companies to acknowledge the justice of our claims: this explanation induced him to yield to my suggestions, and he has this day completed an assurance in the Westminster and General Association.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I enclose you the copy of a letter addressed to the secretary of the Norwich Union Life Office, to which no answer was returned. You would much oblige your readers, by publishing a list of the societies that fee the medical man referred to. Had I been in possession of such a list, the insurance, in the present instance, would have been lost to the above office.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

WALTER B. GILL.

Canonbury, Jan. 1850.

Islington, Dec. 31, 1849.

SIR,—I have received from your office a list of queries, respecting the health &c. of Mr. —, of —. From your position you must be well aware of the question that has arisen between some of the insurance-offices and the medical profession—whether the information sought from the latter deserves remuneration.

I shall be obliged, therefore, by your informing me whether you pay any fee to the medical referee.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

WALTER B. GILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The evasive affectations of the assurance offices, in the present day, would be amusing, were it not for their injustice to the profession.

I send you a specimen.

(CONFIDENTIAL.)

4, Royal Exchange Buildings.

SIR,—Having made a proposal to effect an insurance on my life, and having made reference to you as to the general and present state of my health, I have to request that you will make answers to the queries annexed, &c.

Whatever information you may be pleased to communicate, you may depend on being considered by the Society as strictly confidential.—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
(For M. E.—.) ALEX. M'KEAN.

An answer, in course of post, will be very obliging.

The office thus relieves itself of all obligation regarding our professional opinion, except that for our answer in course of post, which will be very obliging, no doubt, to the applicant, whenever the answer is unfavourable, and withholds his or her policy.

The office should unquestionably enclose the fee, of which they might claim the whole, or a moiety, when the party is introduced.

The directors cannot suffer, for even if the certificate of health be false, (wilfully or ignorantly,) they have their remedy in their possession. But it is clearly very hard for applicants to pay one guinea for the pleasure of being debarred from the privileges which they are anxious to obtain, in consequence, they must be assured, of the communications of one in whom they have *confidentially* reposed all their bodily secrets.

This *vexata questio* should be forthwith settled, either by enactment, or a formal resolution of the profession.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
WALTER C. DENDY.

St. James's Park, Jan. 1850.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND ITS PROJECTED CHARTER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Through the medium of your pages, I beg to draw the attention of the authorities of the College of Physicians to the necessity of their taking a more active part in the subject of Medical Reform. Some months ago a draught of a new Charter was prepared, which had the very reasonable effect of causing those about to join the college to wait for the advantages to be derived therefrom. At the present moment, there are very many anxious to obtain the licence of the college, who naturally refuse to apply for it till the question of reform therein is decided. It, therefore, behoves the college to inform the profession whether or not the charter is likely to be obtained. It is clearly as much for the benefit of the college, as for that of its would-be members, that the point be settled; for, with the exception of those seeking the office of physician to a public institution, few, very few will apply for the licence, while the present uncertainty exists.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
T. C. D.

January 8, 1850.

FACULTY OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, GLASGOW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have been amused as well as disgusted with the self-sufficiency of "a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh," in his silly puling at the awful idea of the Glasgow faculty applying for an amendment of their charter, which he sincerely trusts will not be granted them, because—mark the stupendously important reason—"I think that no diploma should be held legal, except that granted by a Royal College of Surgeons!" Shrink into nothingness, ye thousands of M.D.'s and apothecaries, for this illustrious "I" by itself I, thinks your diplomas should not be held legal. He complains that those holding the "paltry" diploma of the Glasgow faculty have the same privileges as he has with *him*, is astonished that the East India Company take the former, and modestly winds up with, "I trust the Bill which you are about to bring into Parliament will effectually put a stop to all those unqualified practitioners."

It will be gratifying to have been enabled to form some notion of the corporeal identity of this capital "I," this great unknown, who sincerely trusts for such a sweeping enactment. In absence, however, of all exact knowledge, he will pardon the freedom of a few random guesses. He is, most likely, a *gent*, for no gentleman could have so divested his remarks of that courtesy which invariably distinguishes him, no less towards his inferiors than to his equals. He must be a very young "member," vain, perhaps, of his new-fledged honour, and with no great reason to be confident in his own acquirements for future success—for his insolent invectives betray an overbearing disposition, selfish and unmanly spite, ignorance of usages of the society, and a total absence of professional libe-

rality towards those who, he states, "have the same privileges as" himself. He, perhaps, comes under the designation of a disappointed man, who fancies that if he could blast by his vilification those whom he has been unable to compete with on fair terms, he might chance to get a patient in the hoped-for scattering.

It has been rather customary of late for the idle and malicious to try to depreciate, in your pages, the character of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow; and their attempts have been treated hitherto with deserved contempt. The biting and snarling of this "Royal" cur, grown bold by the disregard shown to his precursors, now call for chastisement. I challenge him, not to repeat, but to prove, the grounds of his scandalous aspersion of a body of medical men as far superior in gentlemanly feeling to him as is the day to "black and ugly night." I challenge him to prove wherein the Glasgow Faculty diploma is "paltry," or by one jot, either as to required education, or examination, inferior to his own. As one of "those holding that diploma," but not that alone, I fearlessly press this challenge upon him, and demand, either that he meet it fully and unequivocally by the requisite proofs, or failing, as I know from my own experience of Edinburgh as well as Glasgow, and from that of others, he must, that he apologize for the insult recklessly cast by him upon "those holding the diploma."

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
January, 1850. GLASGUENSIS.

COD-LIVER OIL AND WILD DUCK.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following suggestion may perhaps be worth your notice. The cod-liver oil may be conveniently given in the form of the ordinary almond-oil emulsion, by substituting the cod-liver oil for the almond oil. It is most readily taken when thus prescribed, and many have told me that its flavour is like that of wild duck!—I have the honour to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

HECTOR CAMPBELL HELSHAM.
Assembly-terrace, Mile-end Road, Jan. 15, 1850.

ON THE SOUNDS OF THE HEART.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read with much interest, in a recent number of your journal, an experiment made by Mr. Brakyn, of Dublin, to endeavour to elucidate the causes of the sounds of the heart. Feeling that every new fact which can be brought to bear upon a question still undecided, and so interesting as this, must be important, I resolved to try the experiment myself, and have made two repeated attempts, but have not met with that gentleman's success.

The second sound of the heart is very conclusively shown to be dependent upon the closing of the sigmoid valves; but on this I shall not dwell, as all controversy on this point has for a long time ceased. It was, I presume, to discover the cause of the first sound that the experiment was instituted.

The sound produced by the forcing of air into the ventricle, was certainly a lengthened one, but had nothing of that character about it that would mark it as the production solely of the shutting of the mitral valve; in fact, as I afterwards ascertained, regurgitation always took place into the auricle, and it was to the air rushing over the edges of its membranous curtains that my sound was no doubt in part due; and also, I may add, to a third cause, and which was the rush of air into the aorta. I by no means wish to assert that these causes operated in Mr. Brakyn's case, or that the sound he produced was not exclusively the result of the tension of the mitral valve, but I only wish to state, that having endeavoured to prove this myself, I have twice failed, and in all probability should do so again, for it seemed a matter of the utmost difficulty to drive a current of air into the ventricle with sufficient force, and in the proper direction, so as to close the valves suddenly and perfectly, seeing how they are fixed to the columnæ carneæ, which, in a post-mortem state, are rigid, and not readily admitting of extension. By opening the auricle to observe the valves, I found they never once perfectly closed, and even when placed nearly in apposition, they would not approximate when the current was directed upon them, without some air passing between and causing their vibration.

As regards the operation of the other cause, my experiments showed that when the mitral was shut, the projection of air into the aorta was also productive of a sound, and other