submit to your consideration the following facts. In surveying the history of British medical education for the last 100 years, it will be plainly evident that the Scotch have been decidedly in the van. The Scotch universities have not only insisted on an efficient curriculum, but have allowed none to take their degrees without undergoing a competent examination in the four essentials of medical practice—viz., medicine, surgery, midwifery, and medical jurisprudence. If we turn to England we find a different state of things prevailing there. The chief examining body—the Royal College of Surgeons—has been so considerate to the community as to allow those to qualify who had a knowledge of surgery alone, the qualification practically enabling them to undertake all the branches of the profession, with total ignorance, perhaps, of the principles of medicine and midwifery. It is only necessary to investigate the pages of the Medical Directory in order to verify this fact. It is only within the last few years that this august body have awakened from their lethargy to the due appreciation of their obligations to the public.

With regard to the relative severity of the examinations of the two countries, it will only be necessary to state the following:—Taking the University of Edinburgh as an index of the Scotch, and the Royal College of Surgeons as an index of the English, and submitting the two to the cold evidence of statistics, we find the following:—

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY.				
First Professional Examination		50	per cent.	rejected.
Second	"	50	"	"
Final	"	40	"	"

This shows that in the aggregate about 85 per cent. are remitted for their degree. The Royal College of Surgeons' Primary and Final Examination show, in their results, a percentage of failures of about 65 per cent.

Nearly every professor in the University of Edinburgh has been, or is, an examiner in the University of London—viz., Professors Turner and Cunningham, Anatomy; Professor Rutherford, Physiology; Professor Crum Brown, Chemistry; Professor Fraser, Materia Medica; and Professor Balfour, Botany—and they will severally tell you that the standard in the London University is no higher than that of Edinburgh.

In conclusion, I may state that the University of Edinburgh had a chair of Pathology fifty years before that of any other medical school in the United Kingdom, and that now it is the only examining body that sets a separate paper on Pathology. Apologising for trespassing on your valuable time,—I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

E. K. CAMPBELL, M.B. Edin., M.R.C.S.

Nov. 22nd, 1884.

CASES OF SEVERE DIARRHŒA AT THE BOOTHAM LUNATIC ASYLUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to forward you the following notes, which you may consider sufficiently interesting to record.

On the morning of the 13th ult., very numerous cases of diarrhœa of a severe type were reported to me as having occurred during the previous night among patients and attendants. In the worst cases the diarrhœa was accompanied by severe colicky pains and cramp; several (females only) were sick as well as purged; a few had severe griping pains but no diarrhœa. In the majority of cases the diarrhœa commenced at nightfall and had ceased by 10 A.M. Those affected with griping pain were relieved on the evacuation of the bowels after a dose of castor oil. The after-effects were that some patients habitually constipated said they felt better than usual; in a few the diarrhœa continued and recurred at times for a week or more; several were somewhat enfeebled for a few days; the majority were not affected in their general health.

After careful inquiry into every article of food and drink, I came to the conclusion that the roast beef which had been the almost universal dinner at midday on the 12th ult. was the only substance which could have caused the attack. I found that 158 persons had beef, or beef gravy; of these 135 had severe diarrhœa, or diarrhœa and vomiting; nine had slight diarrhœa or griping pains; thirteen (including some doubtful cases where the patients were demented and unable to give information) were not affected. Ten persons had milk diet, or minced mutton; all these were unaffected. The

gravy appears to have been especially harmful; for twenty-three persons had other meat but with the beef gravy, and all these, except one who took no gravy, were similarly affected. The same beef eaten cold without gravy was not injurious. The cook had thought the beef a little dark coloured, and that the gravy did not flow freely from it when cooked. Some uncooked joints which I saw seemed to be from a well-fed beast; the fat was a good colour; the lean somewhat red and not of a bluish tinge when fresh cut, but not sodden or unhealthy looking, nor of a bad odour; the meat of the cold joints was perhaps a little dry, but nothing unnatural in smell or taste. The beast from which the meat was taken was as usual bought in the market on the Thursday previous, taken to our own slaughter-house, and there killed and cut up.

I found that the beast was a well-fed, healthy ox, which had been brought up at a farm four miles from here, where it had always been kept in company with another beast; that on the morning of Thursday it was attempted to drive the beast to market without its stall companion; the animal resisted so much, and got so wild, that after the drover had got it half way he was obliged to turn it into a field by the roadside whilst he returned to the farm he had started from, and fetched the companion beast. He then drove the two beasts together to market, and they travelled well enough. The beast was bought in the market, and on its being driven to the Asylum Farm, to the slaughter-house there, it again became furious, and the drovers had difficulty in getting it into the yard, and when shut up it continued beating itself about, and was very excited. At the time it was slaughtered the butcher noticed that the blood did not flow from the carcass as freely as it should have done, but all the parts of the beast and its internal organs were perfectly healthy.

I remain, Sir, yours truly,

CHARLES KNIGHT HITCHCOCK.

The Lunatic Hospital, Bootham, York, Nov. 1884.

"OVER-PRESSURE IN EDUCATION."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your article of Nov. 15th, on the above subject, is crushing in its clearness and force, and it is a pity that the lay press do not quote more from your journal when matters of such momentous interest to the present and rising generation are being discussed in its columns. We all know that the authority of THE LANCET in matters medical is in the end supreme, and though it may suit some officials to ignore the voice of the medical press for a time, their capitulation is eventually certain.

There is one argument against "forcing" the brain by overwork, and often useless work, in early life, and I fancy a very strong one, which I should like to point out, and it is this: that according to all we know of that organ, it is the last to reach perfection of growth and maturity of any in the body, and therefore of all others the last that should be overworked in childhood, when its specific gravity and development are utterly incomplete and unfitted to bear overstraining. Whereas the body ceases to grow after the age of twenty-five years, the brain, we know absolutely, grows in bulk for fifteen years longer; and if the mind is any index of its perfections, it certainly increases in strength and capacity for sustained work for fifteen or twenty years after that. The functions of the brain may be as stunted and crippled as those of the body often are; they may be cramped, dull, introspective, or precocious; and accordingly they require intellectual work in proportion to their development. And more than this, the functions of the brain are as much dependent on the consumption of matter in the shape of food as are those of the body; therefore it is absurd to expect the half-starved child to do the same amount of work as the well-fed one may be put to do with impunity.

It is a well-known axiom that early maturity, physical or intellectual, means early decay, and if the present mode of education, by doing this, deteriorates the brain and nervous system of the rising generation of children, how much worse will it be for the next one, the produce of an enervated and morally and physically enfeebled race. The days for whipping children to death in schools are gone—let us hope never to return again. We are more refined now; we whip their brains to death instead; and if the brutality is not so repulsive to the looker-on, or so palpable, it is equally efficacious in the end, and far more cruel, as the process is slower

and its ultimate consequences are more serious, for they affect generations yet unborn.

Your correspondent, Dr. R. Macpherson, in last week's LANCET, has given a graphic account of the evils of the present system of education, and I do not believe that there is a medical man practising in England who cannot recall cases illustrating this evil of over-pressure, especially among the children of the poor.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Sherborne, Dec. 1st, 1884. NATHANIEL EDWARD DAVIES.

THE LONDON UNIVERSITY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Many hard things are being said just now about the University of London, some of them indeed just, but others very unjust. The most amusing suggestion, however, comes from Manchester, and is set forth under the heading "Victoria University," and is supplied by your correspondent there. He suggests that King's College and University College should take steps to become affiliated with the so-called "University of the North." Now, Sir, while the whole body of the profession is yearning for some "conjoint scheme" we are meanwhile saddled with a twentieth licensing body, and while it seems to be the fashion to grumble at the exclusiveness and so-called tyranny of the London University, nothing is said about the intolerance and illiberality of the newest of the universities. The gateway to the Victoria is if anything more strongly guarded than that of the London, and there is added, besides, that antiquated humbug of exclusiveness which is included under the offensive word "affiliation." The medical students of King's and University Colleges will be quite capable of taking care of themselves in the matter of examinations, which are not less stiff in the northern university than the proverbial ones held at Burlington House. In the name of justice and common sense how is it that the one university is perpetually abused while the new one is pursuing vigorously unheeded the same policy to a much greater degree.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

WILLIAM DYSON, B.A., M.D. Lond.

Sheffield, Dec., 1884.

EXAMINATION OF ARMY MEDICAL OFFICERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With reference to my letter in your issue of the 22nd ult., wherein I advocated the desirability of allowing surgeons-major to take the examination for promotion to the rank of brigade surgeon at an earlier period than after twenty years' service, I find that the revised War Office circular of Nov. 1st has omitted the words "after twenty years' service," thus leaving the time when a surgeon-major may be examined perfectly open in future. I should fancy every such officer who wishes to pass will be afforded the opportunity between his fifteenth and twentieth year of service. This is as it should be, and the new examination, by inviting officers of this standing to take stock of their experience and to correlate it with the latest advances in military medical science, will tend to make them very accomplished indeed in this their specialty. I have been afforded an inspection of the papers given at the recent examination, the first of its kind. The questions are, as I anticipated in my previous letter, eminently practical. Every officer of any experience should, I would say, be able to give satisfactory replies to most of them. The wisdom which comes from experience, not from books, has been asked to show itself, and I do not doubt that on this first occasion it has done so.—I am, Sir, yours &c.,

December, 1884.

G.

LIVERPOOL.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE RECENT CASE OF GOOD v. WHITTLE AND OTHERS.

THE hardships inflicted on medical practitioners in the regular and legitimate discharge of their duties are well illustrated in the recent case of Good v. Whittle and others. That the defendants believed themselves to be thoroughly justified in the course they took is beyond dispute. That

they had good and sufficient grounds for their belief is clearly shown by the charge of the presiding judge (Justice Cave) and the verdict of the jury. And yet the defendants' costs amount to upwards of £630, of which they will have to pay £470, one-fourth (Dr. Mould's share) having been borne by the asylum authorities. The plaintiff, as is very frequently the case, being unable to pay, the costs fall upon the defendants. A fund is being raised (as noticed in the last issue of THE LANCET), and subscriptions have already come in. It may happen to any practitioner to be placed in the defendants' position, and it is greatly to be desired that the whole amount may be raised. Dr. Nevins is the treasurer, and subscriptions may be paid to him or to the Whittle and Hutchinson Fund, North and South Wales Bank, Hardman-street, Liverpool.

THE MAYOR AND THE ROYAL SOUTHERN HOSPITAL.

For upwards of forty years it has been the custom for the newly elected Mayor to attend the morning service in state at St. Barnabas Church on the second Sunday after his election, when a sermon is preached and a collection made on behalf of the Royal Southern Hospital. In accordance therewith the Mayor (Alderman David Radcliffe) attended on the 23rd ult., when a sermon was preached by the Bishop of Sierra Leone, and a collection made which amounted to £102. After service the Mayor, accompanied by Lord Claud Hamilton, M.P., and others, visited the hospital and went through some of the wards, accompanied by members of the medical staff.

HEALTH OF LIVERPOOL.

At the weekly meeting of the Health Committee on the 4th inst. the medical officer stated that there were fourteen cases of small-pox in the new hospital, also that twenty-three cases of scarlatina had been reported, which latter were not confined to any particular locality, but were spread all over the city. The death-rate was equal to 27.5 per 1000 of the estimated population.

THE LOCK HOSPITAL.

For some months past the wards of the Lock Hospital, both male and female, have been unusually full, and the number of beds being very limited the cases are mostly syphilitic, the exceptions being gonorrhœa with severe complications, or chancroids which, from neglect, dirt, and drink, have assumed a sloughing character. Of the latter there have been several instances lately, these cases always occurring in groups; the same remark applies to cases of orchitis and epididymitis, and the more severe forms of syphilis. Dr. Bernard has recently had in his ward several cases of glassblowers, all of whom had contracted constitutional syphilis by using the blowpipe of an infected fellow-workman. The cases commenced with chancres on the lips, accompanied with enlargement and induration of the submaxillary glands, and the subsequent appearance of roseola. The genital organs were entirely free from any appearance of disease, and there could be no doubt as to the source of infection. Dr. Bernard's clinical class has been well attended.

DEATHS FROM HOMICIDAL STRANGULATION.

At the recent assizes two cases of murder by strangulation were tried before Mr. Justice Day. One occurred in Manchester, the deceased being the wife of the prisoner. She was found dead by the neighbours, whom the prisoner called in, and with certain marks of violence on her neck, which were quite inconsistent with the prisoner's statement—viz., that "she had fallen into the fender while they had a bit of a bother." The body was seen first by Mr. Berkeley, assistant to Dr. Sutton, and the prisoner was taken in custody. Dr. Sutton made the post-mortem examination, and attributed the death to asphyxia from strangulation. Dr. Cullingworth, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at Owens College, who also examined the body, gave as his supposition that death had been caused by pressure on each side of the neck, where bruises were visible just over the course of the internal jugular vein and carotid arteries. The cerebral veins were very much congested, so also were the lungs, but not so much so as in ordinary cases of strangulation, where the windpipe has been compressed. The prisoner was convicted and executed on Monday last, having previously fully confessed his guilt. In the other case, which arose out of a drunken Irish row at Upholland, near Wigan, Dr. J. L. Molyneux gave evidence. The appearances of strangulation were well marked. The prisoner was found guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced to twelve years' penal servitude.