the best of charities is liable to be abused, and this will be the more apt to happen in the present connexion if, in the words of the above resolution, the dispensaries should be released from a central parent authority by becoming self-governing. It is possible, however, that the Association do not mean to relinquish all control over them, but to continue to exercise a more or less general supervision. If so, the danger is probably less.

The special form of abuse which occurs to my mind is that to which so many of the medical benefit clubs existing among artisans are liable—that is, the want of a rule recognising some fixed proportion of income under which applicants may avail themselves of the benefits of the provident method, above which they are held to be able to pay for medical attendance in the ordinary way. Fix the limit, say for the sake of argument, at the £1 10s. per week wage. Workmen are usually considered well-to-do who receive this amount and are of steady habits. They have frequently means of increasing it by odd work and otherwise, and are often content and able on this sum to pay small fees for regular medical attendance without applying to dispensary or hospital. If all whose weekly allowance does not exceed this were eligible for the exercise of provident practice, the efforts of the philanthropic need not slacken for want of scope, and the fixing of a maximum level of salary would exclude many of considerably greater income, and who do not belong to the working class, commonly so-called, who would otherwise flock to the place of cheap treatment, but whose natural and legitimate means of medical aid is to be found in general practice, and whose purse would be in no degree overtaxed by its moderate charges. Justice is an essential part of true generosity, and the promoters of this scheme, if they desire its advantages to circulate among those who really stand in need of them and these only, should be discriminating in its application. Otherwise all such measures must necessarily tend to corrupt, instead of improving, the methods of medical practice, and to become more and more the objects of distrust with medical men.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

June, 1883.

B. G. M.

THE PARKES MUSEUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—After seven years of unremitting labour on the part of its promoters the Parkes Museum has at length been established as an independent educational institution. Its career has been most graciously inaugurated by the President, H.R.H. the Duke of Albany, and there can be no doubt that if it be cordially supported the Museum is destined to become a valuable centre for the diffusion of a knowledge of all matters connected with the health of the people at home or abroad, whether civilians, soldiers, or sailors. The Museum, it is hoped, will be useful for the display, in actual operation whenever possible, not only of apparatus which has met with general acceptance, but more especially for a succession of the most recent inventions in all departments of practical hygiene. The library will, it is thought, form one of the most important features of the Museum, and the council confidently hope that its value will be increased by the contributions of all who are interested in sanitation. Lectures both for professional men and the public will be organised from time to time and practical demonstrations will be given to artisans and others whose duty it is to carry out the details of sanitary work. The necessity for this was fully urged by H.R.H. the President in his inaugural address. The council is particularly anxious to afford assistance to any recognised teacher or professor of hygiene who may wish to make use of the Museum for the purpose of giving practical instructions to his pupils. In order that the Museum may flourish, the hearty support of all who are interested, and especially of those who are professionally interested, in sanitation is necessary; and we desire most earnestly to ask not only our professional brethren, but the public at large, to assist us in the work which we have in hand by becoming life members or annual members of the Museum, and by encouraging others to do the same. It may be well to add that by the deed of incorporation the control of the Museum is vested in the members by whom the council and officers are elected at the annual general meetings. At these or at special meetings ample opportunity will be afforded to all for the expression of opinion. In addition to these privileges,

members have the right of free admission to the Museum, Library, and Reading room, whenever these are open, and the further right to introduce a friend. The fee for membership is £1 1s. per annum, or £10 10s. for life membership. All communications to be addressed to the Secretary at the Museum.—We are, Sir, yours truly,

DOUGLAS GALTON, C.B., D.C.L., F.R.S. (Chairman);
G. V. POORE, M.D., F.R.C.P. (Vice-Chairman);
BERKELEY HILL (Treasurer); W. H. CORFIELD,
M.A., M.D., Oxon.; F. DE CHAUMONT, M.D.,
F.R.S.; ROGERS FIELD, B.A., M. Inst. C.E.; GEO.
GODWIN, F.R.S.; T. HAYTER LEWIS, F.S.A.;
JOHN MARSHALL, F.R.S., F.R.C.S.; J. RUSSELL
REYNOLDS, M.D., F.R.S.; EDWARD C. ROBINS,
F.S.A., F.R.I.B.A.; EDWARD H. SIEVEKING, M.D.,
F.S.A.; T. ROGER SMITH, F.R.I.B.A.; J. C.
STEELE, M.D.; T. TWINING; ALFRED WATER-
HOUSE, A.R.A.; DAWSON WILLIAMS, M.D. (Hon.
Secretary); MARK H. JUDGE, A.R.I.B.A. (Secre-
tary and Curator).

THE SCOTCH BODIES AND THE BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of last Saturday a short account is given of an interview which certain members of the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen had with the Lord Advocate, on the subject of the Medical Act Amendment Bill. The account reproduces an error, which was originated by one of the Edinburgh newspapers, in reporting that I had made the absurd statement that the extra-mural lecturers in Scotland would suffer a loss of prestige from the existence of a university majority on the Medical Board for Scotland. The verbatim report of what was actually said in reference to "prestige" is as follows:—"It cannot for a moment be pretended, my lord, that the Scottish corporations are eminent educational institutions. They are merely examining authorities; and even as examining authorities, the work they perform is, in the sense I have explained, a restricted one. . . . It has been asserted that the composition of the proposed Medical Board, and especially the existence of a university majority upon that Board, would seriously injure them and even lead to their extinction. We maintain that there are no legitimate grounds for such anticipations.—The Lord Advocate: You say 'seriously.' Do you think they would be injured at all?—Professor Fraser: It is to some extent a loss of prestige that the corporations should be put in a minority. I think it would not be possible to say there would be any real injury; but if they are placed in a minority there would be a loss of prestige. The Bill, by provisions entirely different from those dealing with the composition of the Medical Board, may restrict the number of licentiates they create; but even this is altogether problematical. If it do so, the result will not be due to the number of their representatives on the Board being smaller than that of the universities; but to the fact that a State examination, of equal value in each division of the kingdom, will be instituted, whereby some of the inducements which hitherto have attracted candidates to the Scottish corporations, will no longer be in existence."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS R. FRASER.

University of Edinburgh, June 19th, 1883.

PRESENCE OF BACILLUS TUBERCULOSIS IN AN ABSCESS NEAR THE ANUS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Six months ago a young clerk, aged twenty-one, came under treatment for hæmoptysis and other signs of phthisis; after about three months' treatment he got strong enough to return to his employment, at which he continued up to the commencement of this month. I saw him on the 5th, when he was suffering acutely from an abscess in the neighbourhood of the anus, and, fearing lest it might burst into the bowel and give rise to a painful blind internal fistula, I opened the abscess at once and let out a quantity of thin curdy fetid pus. A microscopic examination of this fluid by a half-inch object glass, after the usual process of staining, revealed the presence of great quantities of well-marked typical tubercle bacillus. Now, the presence of these

organisms in this situation is interesting, as they tend to throw some light on the well-known connexion between fistula and phthisis. On this account you may, perhaps, deem this note not unworthy of being recorded.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Manchester, June 10th, 1883.

R. C. SMITH, M.D., D.Sc.

GLASGOW.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE MEDICAL BILL.

THE agitation in connexion with the new Medical Bill still goes on in this city. A meeting of the citizens of Glasgow, called together and presided over by the Lord Provost, was held last week. The resolutions, which were carried unanimously, called for a larger representation of the corporations and extra-mural teachers on the Scotch Board, and an equality of examination fees for university and extra-academical students. At this meeting Prof. Leishman made a powerful speech, in which the university side of the question was put in its best light. He pointed out that the real danger which the Scotch schools had to fear was not the undue preponderance of university or corporation influence at the Scotch Board, but rather the undue preponderance of English influence in the General Council—influence which could scarcely fail to be exercised to the prejudice of the Scotch schools as a whole. In a letter to the newspapers Prof. McCall Anderson directs public attention to the same danger.

BENEFACTIONS TO HOSPITALS.

Glasgow medical charities are in luck just now. The Royal Infirmary has received a legacy of ten thousand pounds from the trustees of the late Mr. Buchanan, of Moray-place, Edinburgh. On the south side of the river also a large sum, estimated at eighty thousand pounds, has been left by Mr. Couper, of Cathcart, for the erection and support of an infirmary in or near Crosshill, one of our southern suburbs. The trustees are directed to proceed at once with the scheme, and are empowered to receive further subscriptions in support of it. This sets the Southern hospital scheme on a sound financial basis. But the question rises, How will it affect the movement already on foot for the erection of a hospital in the same district by general subscription? The committee in charge of the latter movement have obtained some promises of subscriptions, have selected building plans after a competition in which a handsome premium was awarded to the successful architect, and have bought from the city a piece of ground which will probably be regarded as too small now that Mr. Couper's trustees have so large a sum at their disposal. The two schemes must be conjoint in some sort of way, as however much one new hospital is wanted on the south side of the river, there is scarcely room for two.

SCOTTISH NOTES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

FIRE ON BOARD THE "MARS" TRAINING SHIP.

A FIRE which occurred a fortnight ago on board this vessel at Dundee, doing damage to the extent of about £1000, is now supposed to be the work of some incendiaries among the boys receiving the benefits of the institution, and the matter is at present being considered by the Procurator Fiscal.

THE QUEEN AND THE ABERDEEN INFIRMARY.

Dr. Profeit has had the satisfaction of handing to the treasurer of the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, as an aid to the liquidation of the debt pressing so heavily upon that institution, a subscription of £100, graciously offered by Her Majesty the Queen.

THE USE OF STIMULANTS IN GALASHIELS POORHOUSE.

It appears, from a recent report, that dissatisfaction has been expressed by the managers with the amount of alcoholic beverages used in this poorhouse. Inquiry has been made as to the quantities consumed in similar circumstances

elsewhere, and the report shows remarkable disparity in the various localities, and generally indicates a disposition on the part of medical officers to minimise the use of spirits. As might have been expected, the medical officers at Galashiels have no difficulty in showing that the committee omitted to allow for exceptional circumstances, and that no hard-and-fast rule can be applied to this question.

NEW LUNATIC ASYLUM FOR LANARKSHIRE.

The County Lunatic Board for Lanarkshire have purchased properties of an area amounting to six hundred acres in the parish of Shotts, for the purpose of erecting a large asylum. The choice of site has occupied a committee for a lengthened period, and during the past three years about sixty different estates have been inspected. That which is now chosen seems to possess all the desirable surroundings for a building devoted to such purpose. It is stated that the new asylum will be fitted to accommodate one thousand patients, and the probable cost is placed at £150,000.

DUNDEE ROYAL LUNATIC ASYLUM.

At the annual meeting of the governors of this institution, held this week, a financial report of rather a depressing character was read. It appears that the whole of the patients have been removed to the new asylum, which remains as yet unfinished from want of funds, occasioned by the failure on the part of the directors to effect a sale of the old buildings, valued at over £65,000. This embarrassment prevents any further outlay on the uncompleted buildings, and necessitates a rise in the rate at which patients have been received. Dr. Rorie's report gives a total of 465 under treatment during the year, of whom 340 remain at present, as against 326 at the corresponding period of last year. The percentage of recoveries was 43·88, and of deaths 7·09.

MONTROSE ROYAL ASYLUM AND INFIRMARY.

The annual meeting of the managers of these institutions was held last week, and interesting reports were read by Drs. Howden and Laurence. The number of patients in the asylum is this year 510, as compared with 488 at the same date last year. Recent additions to buildings give accommodation for eighty additional beds. During the year 605 patients have been under treatment, the average number being 502. Fifty-four patients were discharged, and forty-one died during the year, phthisis as usual being the prominent cause of death. The recoveries were in the ratio of 30·77 to the admissions, and the deaths of 8·17 to the average number resident during the year. Dr. Howden, commenting on the tables recommended by the Medico-Psychological Association, expresses doubts as to the value of asylum statistics, so much of the information being affected by influences varying in different institutions, or even in the same institution in different years. Figures are given to show the increase of weight in patients admitted from other asylums, Dr. Howden attributing this to improved diet, or to the mere effect of change of residence. He points out that so far as the increase depends on the latter cause, it might be largely ensured by a system of transfer from one asylum to another. For this purpose all public and private asylums might be considered as wards of a large hospital, whose inmates could be removed from one to another as requirements of their cases indicated, and the trifling outlay recouped by the higher rate of recoveries. Dr. Laurence, in detailing the work of the hospital, referred in feeling terms to the death of Dr. Steele; and Dr. Kay was appointed in the latter gentleman's stead. Dr. Johnson of Kair was appointed consulting medical officer. I believe the portrait of Dr. Howden is now finished, and will ere long be presented to that gentleman.

IRELAND.

(From our own Correspondent.)

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

THE Midsummer Commencements will be held in the Examination Hall on Friday, the 22nd inst., when the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws will be conferred upon His Excellency Earl Spencer, and Lord Wolsley. On the same occasion Dr. George H. Kidd will receive the degree of Magister Artis Obstetricæ (*honori causa*). Dr. Kidd is