THE PLEA OF INSANITY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In confirmation of the able article of Dr. Forbes Winslow in your last number, relative to the insanity of Watson and Edmunds, I forward you a somewhat unique case that occurred at Huntingdon some time since.

Charles Burton, aged forty-five, labourer, Stilton, was tried at the July Assizes, 1848, for the murder of his wife and child by cutting their throats—he attempting unsuccessfully the same upon himself. On an investigation of the case I had no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that he was insane at the time, and that the letting of blood from himself restored his reason. I was very strongly confirmed in this opinion by the gaoler, a very intelligent and experienced officer, and by the chaplain of the gaol. The counsel of the prisoner was instructed to put in this plea, but for some reason he did not do so. Burton was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. A strong representation was made to the judge, Baron Parke, and he directed the under-sheriff, G. G. Day, Esq., to investigate the matter. He did so, and sufficient evidence was placed before the judge for him to respite the prisoner, with this very singular but very proper order that the prisoner should be tried again at the March Assizes, 1849, upon the second indictment—the murder of his child. The trial came on before Chief Baron Pollock. The plea of insanity was put in successfully. Burton was acquitted on the ground of insanity. He was detained in the county gaol of Huntingdon, and in the course of a few months became a raving maniac; as such he was conveyed to Bedford Lunatic Asylum, and soon died there.

Nothing could be more satisfactory to us who took part in this case, not only in the very legitimate mode of deducing the presence of insanity before the judge, but also in the sad and mournful issue. I quite feel with Dr. Winslow that it may not be unlikely something of the same sort may appear in the case of Watson.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Huntingdon, Jan. 29th, 1872. M. FOSTER, F.R.C.S.

THE NATIONAL THANKSGIVING.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—You well know that most of our hospitals and infirmaries labour under a chronic state of poverty. "Hospital Sunday" prospers in the provinces, but fails in the metropolis.

In St. Paul's Cathedral will shortly be assembled the wealth, piety, and learning of the land to render thanks for the recovery of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Thousands would testify their gratitude by a thanks-offering on that occasion to those noble institutions seeking to save life and assuage pain; constantly struggling in their merciful mission for "want of funds."

Generous souls throughout the kingdom would reflect on past sickness and recovery, and send their mite, conferring a boon on our unendowed hospitals and infirmaries, and rendering giver and receiver glad alike.

The Prince has already indicated such a course by paying over a handsome donation from an Indian gentleman to a poor hospital, and Her Majesty the Queen is constantly sending game, &c., to such places.

May I beg your able advocacy for the "Hospital Sunday" movement, and not to cease till it is an accomplished fact.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
Great Coram-st., Russell-sq., Jan. 29th, 1872. GEORGE REID.

THE CHELSEA HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to call your attention to the enclosed circular respecting this institution, and at the same time to express my regret that the medical men of this neighbourhood have such a tendency to rush into new ones of this description when "they are not required." In 1851 there were three dispensaries in Pimlico and Chelsea; since then five others have been started; now another is required, we are told.

Does it not seem strange that the medical men here are so anxious to immortalise themselves individually, instead of uniting together and placing one of the said institutions in good working order—rather than try to keep up so many establishments by the disgraceful methods of puffing resorted to—viz., by placarding the walls of the neighbourhood and sensational articles in the daily papers.

I must enter my protest against such proceedings. We have now three hospitals close at hand, fully competent to deal with all the cases requiring charitable assistance. Why, then, should so many others be kept up to the injury of the general practitioner, and for no other reasons than the sake of notoriety of the parties connected with them, and special use of the subscribers' servant?

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Eccleston-street, Pimlico, Jan. 10th, 1872. O. E. P. CHARD.

Medical News.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—The following gentlemen, having passed the required examinations for the diploma, were duly admitted Members of the College at meetings of the Court of Examiners on the 25th and 26th ult. :—

Bethell, Alfred, L.S.A., Pilton, Somerset.
Bland, George, L.S.A., Gerrard-street, Islington.
Cartwright, Henry Gordon, Burton-on-Trent.
Cawley, Thomas, Great Yarmouth.
Fordham, John William, L.R.C.P. Edin., Stepney.
Foster, William James, Birmingham.
Griffith, Richard Glyn, Bangor, North Wales.
Hamilton, Alexander M. S., M.D. Queen's Univ. Irel., Ballymoney, Co. Antrim.
Magrath, John, L.S.A., Forest-row, East Grinstead.
Matcham, Alfred, L.R.C.P. Edin., Lowestoft.
Moore, Arthur Jackson, L.S.A., Debenham, Suffolk.
Murdoch, Donald, L.S.A., Rotherhithe.
Newman, Alfred Kingcombe, Hawk's Bay, New Zealand.
Oldham, Charles Edmund, B.A. Cantab., Cambridge.
Pitt, Isaac, L.R.C.P. Edin., Birmingham.
Palmer, Ambrose Myrie, Clapham.
Popham, Francis W. H., L.S.A., Gawler, South Australia.
Rendall, William, L.S.A., Maiden Newton, Dorchester.
Ross, W. Graham, M.D. McGill Coll. Montreal, Ontario, Canada.
Russell, Ebenezer Geer, L.S.A., Pool, Cornwall.
Skaife, Frederick, L.R.C.P. Edin., Easingwold, Yorks.
Steele, Edward Henry, L.S.A., Dorchester.
Stokes, Henry Haldane, M.B. Dub., Tralee, Co. Kerry.
Wade, Reginald, L.S.A., Cross, Somersetshire.
Wallace, Thomas, M.D. Queen's Univ. Irel., Cardiff.
Ward, Walter Alfred, L.S.A., Notting-hill.
Weatherhead, John Fraser, L.S.A., Holloway.
Williams, Alfred Henry, M.B. Aberd., Brixton.

Of the ninety-two candidates examined on Jan. 23rd, 24th, 25th, and 26th, twenty-two failed to satisfy the Court, and were referred for a period of six months to further professional study.

The following are the names of the candidates who were successful at the recent Preliminary Examination in general knowledge for the Fellowship of the College of Surgeons :—

I. Adams, C. C. Beddoes, J. F. F. Barnes, W. H. Bennett, P. H. Benson, C. de L. Brock, W. H. Besant, C. R. Bonsall, H. C. Burton, R. Carter, A. S. Eccles, G. C. Evans, R. Edwards, H. E. Friend, J. F. Dixon, A. W. Galloway, F. M. Granger, P. de H. Haig, W. S. A. Griffith, W. C. Hansell, A. C. Brock, F. J. Hawken, G. G. Hodgson, A. C. James, A. F. Hawkins, W. B. Johnson, M. M. Hill, W. P. Anson, A. G. Lacey, H. Munro, H. A. Nicholls, C. W. Owen, J. W. C. Merriman, J. Mackenzie, F. T. Paul, H. W. Moore, E. J. M. Phillips, R. C. Revell, H. P. Payne, J. R. Ross, T. Richards, G. D. Thorne, A. A. Page, H. A. Speed, W. Tarrant, E. Tredinnick, J. M'D. Tudge, A. P. Russell, A. A. Thomas, O. Vincent, W. C. Ward, W. L. Webber, H. F. Weiss, G. E. Wherry, E. W. Whitlock, W. H. Cripps, W. C. James, A. H. Young, H. G. Shaw, E. P. Aphorpe, W. J. Candler, C. P. B. Clubbe.

The following candidates were successful at the Preliminary Examination for the Membership :—

C. J. Addison, E. W. Alden, A. R. Anderson, W. Armstrong, W. J. Atkey, J. E. Andrews, J. A. Baber, A. J. Bailey, D. S. E. Bain, J. D. Astley, J. H. J. Baillie, W. E. L. Batty, W. M. Ball, H. J. L. Bennett, M. L. Bell, G. H. Barton, W. Blakie, T. F. I. Blaker, J. G. Blackman, G. V. Burd, R. Bruce, St. J. C. Bennett, L. B. Calcott, S. Caffyn, J. L. Poynder, H. Castle, W. F. Chadwick, F. W. Cleveland, W. A. Christie, G. E. Coleman, P. Cooper, W. H. Clarke, J. W. Collington, C. R. Crane, C. C. Cripps, H. P. Dunn, A. C. Parker, H. B. S. Curll, A. K. Dresser, E. D. Farmer, T. Fisher, P. S. Eve, L. W. Fox, H. Gascoigne, E. H. Field, W. E. Godfrey, W. P. Feltham, S. C. Harris, R. Heald, A. Hurding, J. C. L. Hains, J. G. Harries, R. A. H. Hart, R. S. Hawkes, J. H. Houghton, E. Hicks, H. G. Hicks, H. O. P. Jones, W. D. Jefferson, F. A. Jeans, E. Judkins, P. S. Kendale, H. R. Kelham, A. Kidd, E. T. Lewin, D. G. Lewis, J. S. Lush, T. T. Logan, H. W. M. Macdonald, W. A. Marsh, C. E. B. Maile, C. R. S. Mason, W. S. Merriman, C. F. Middleton, G. R. Moore, W. Morgan, W. H. Neilson, S. W. Nockolds, G. N. Parker, L. Potts, H. Pullon, E. T. Prior, A. J. Popert, F. J. Pound, W. J. W.