and I wrote a note to Mr. Harness, to which I say that he was thoroughly entitled; but I did not express any opinion as to therapeutic value, as that question did not come within the scope of my investigation.

I notice that a London physician, a general practitioner, a surgeon-general in the army, a navy surgeon, a second general practitioner and another physician, amongst ourselves, to say nothing of continental opinion, speak in terms of praise of the institution; and personally I challenge you to tell me where I could find, at any rate in this country, such perfect static and other machines as those which Mr. Harness possesses and which he advertises are at the service of the medical profession.

I protest against your insinuation that I and of course the medical practitioners I refer to above are insensible to the "honour of our profession." To me such an insinuation is of no moment, as my valued friends will not be influenced by it, but to younger men it might prove of grave import.

I am, Sirs, yours obediently,

HERBERT TIBBITS, M.D., F.R.C.P.E.

Welbeck-street, W., Oct. 11th, 1892.

THE MEDICAL OFFICERSHIP OF HEALTH OF KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The Council of the Borough of Kingston-on-Thames have, it appears, received notice from their medical officer of health that he is about to resign his appointment, and they have consequently authorised their clerk to advertise for candidates for the vacancy. The committee, who had originally to consider the matter, came to the conclusion that it would be best to increase the present stipend and appoint a medical man who was not engaged in private practice. But the Council, on hearing the decision, entered on a further discussion, and at last came to the conclusion that as they had a good inspector of nuisances the medical officer of health would have but little to do, and they might therefore very well reduce the present salary. Now, with all due deference to this authority, I venture to say that the sanitary condition of Kingston-on-Thames is far worse than they appear to imagine, and the medical officer of health, if he is determined to bring to light and correct all sanitary defects, will have his time more than closely occupied. However, should the Council, in spite of the advice tendered, determine to adhere to their decision, it would surely be advisable for them to make the election an annual one till some scheme for consolidating the various health appointments were agreed upon.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

Oct. 12th, 1892.

SANITAS.

* * Kingston has a population of some 27,000, which is not large enough to engage the whole services of a medical officer of health. We have always argued against annual appointments because it is unfair to put the medical officer of health in the position of submitting to an annual chance of losing his office, a result which has often happened if by too much zeal he has offended any members of his Authority. The proper course for Kingston is to combine with other districts, and in this way secure the whole time of a medical officer.—ED. L.

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT COLLEGE.

To the Editors of THE LANCET

SIRS,—I feel assured you will find room to insert the following most gratifying correspondence between the teaching staff of Epsom College and the Council. The evidence of such a body of men must be pleasing confirmation to you that the munificent aid you have given has been rightly bestowed. I shall most gladly receive any contributions towards these most necessary objects—a larger charity to our pensioners and increased accommodation for our pupils.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

C. HOLMAN, M.D., Treasurer.

26, Gloucester-place, Portman-square, W., Oct. 10th, 1892.

Bursar's Office, Epsom College,
Oct. 4th, 1892.

DEAR SIR,—I have to-day forwarded to the Secretary a donation which the members of the Common Room here would like to subscribe to the Extension Scheme Fund as set forth at the Biennial Festival in April last.

Believe me, very faithfully yours,

W. DOUGLAS CROSSLEY, Bursar.

Royal Medical Benevolent College Office, 37, Soho-square, W.,

Oct. 7th, 1892.

DEAR SIR,—I am instructed to inform you that the donation from the Masters of Epsom College towards the extension fund has been received by the Council with very great pleasure.

The generally improved tone of the school, the distinctions gained by pupils at the universities and elsewhere, and the successes in the playing fields all point to good work done by the staff and most loyal and hearty devotion to the best interests of the College.

Such a practical expression of confidence in the future of the school and belief in the necessity for extension by those so well qualified to know is most gratifying. The Council would assure the contributors that this question of enlarging the accommodation is constantly the subject of their thoughts, and they would express the hope that this gift coming from such a body of men may prove to the profession and to the public how necessary extension has become, so that many may be incited to follow their example.

The larger charity to the pensioners needs no demonstration.

The desire of the Council has always been to feel that they were in touch with their staff.

They believe that this donation in aid of their work is a proof that the Masters feel themselves to be at one with the Council in their earnest desire to make Epsom College one of the best schools in England. With hearty co-operation they hope to see the College a blessing to the children of medical men and a centre from which a first-rate education shall be offered to the public at large.

I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

J. BERNARD LAMB, Secretary.

W. D. Crossley, Esq., Bursar of Epsom College.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Opening of the Medical Institution for the Winter Meetings.

THE first meeting of the Medical Institution for the present season took place on the evening of Thursday, the 6th inst., and was very well attended, there being 160 members and associates present. An address was given by the President, Dr. Thomas R. Glynn, on the Diagnosis of Hysteria. It was an extremely able discourse, well illustrated with cases, diagrams, tables &c., and it is satisfactory to learn that it will be published, as it will form a valuable addition to the literature of the subject. Mr. John Newton followed with an address on Art. Cordial votes of thanks were passed to both of these gentlemen, and the meeting adjourned to another part of the building, where a substantial supper was provided and a most agreeable evening was passed.

Mr. Mitchell Banks's Address at Leeds.

The address delivered at Leeds by Mr. Mitchell Banks of this city is a very felicitous illustration of the advice given by him in an address at the Medical Institution here last winter. In it he urged his brethren to cultivate the reading of good general as well as medical literature. It will be seen from a perusal of the lecture published in THE LANCET of last week that Mr. Banks does not confine either his remarks or his attention to English literature, but embraces French as well. Even the hardest worked members of the profession have some leisure, and this example of "learned leisure" may well be followed.

Medical Students and Doctors in Fiction.

It is somewhat remarkable that while Dickens's well-known characters, Benjamin Allen and Bob Sawyer, still continue to reappear every recurring October, how very little account is taken of another character drawn by the same master hand—that of Allan Woodcourt, the nobly self-denying young doctor in "Bleak House." The concluding words of the story, in which the doctor's wife describes their happy life and the esteem in which her husband is held by rich and poor alike, are among Dickens's finest writings, and yet how seldom they are heard or quoted. The student career of Allan Woodcourt must presumably have been very different from that of Benjamin Allen or Bob Sawyer, nevertheless the public cling to these two with a tenacity worthy of better subjects. Similarly, in the two characters of Mr. Samuel Huxter and Dr. Firmin the immortal Thackeray has portrayed two very undesirable specimens of members of the profession. But his Dr. Goodenough is a noble character, of which any profession may be proud. The original is said to be the late Dr. John Elliotson, to whom its author dedicates his famous work "Pendennis" in the following terms: "Thirteen months ago, when it seemed likely that this story had come to a close, a kind friend brought you to my bedside, whence in all probability I never should have risen but for your constant watchfulness and skill. I like to recall your great goodness and kindness at that time, when kindness and friendship were most needed and welcome, and as you would