being also at the same time bound to give notice, the medical attendant need not appear in the matter at all, merely sending his notice privately to the health officer. It is to be regretted that your correspondent "H" should have failed to sign his name to his erroneous statements; and before blaming the Reading authority it would have been better for him to have read their Act.

I remain, Sir, yours, &c.,

JOHN SHEA, A.B., M.D.,

Physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, and Medical Officer of Health for the Borough of Reading, &c.

Reading, Aug. 27th, 1881.

CONSULTATION WITH HOMŒOPATHS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your editorial remarks on this subject in last week's LANCET illustrate the truth of what I said in the corresponding number of the *British Medical Journal*, that the unfortunate utterances of Dr. Bristowe and Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson had placed the British Medical Association in a false position. It is certainly not true, as you suggest, that in the Council of that Association, to which Mr. Gamgee and myself belong, any such deep and well-concerted scheme with reference to homœopaths has been hatched. I agree with you that the mode of raising the question adopted is most unsatisfactory; but it is still open to the Committee of Council (the body which selects the readers of addresses) to repudiate all responsibility for individual utterances, and failing this, the Council, the only really representative body in the Association, can be appealed to. In the last resort, a special meeting of all the members could be called; and I fully believe it would then be found that the Association would give forth no uncertain sound.

Your obedient servant,

August, 1881.

H. NELSON HARDY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With due submission to the authority with which Dr. Syer Bristowe and Mr. Hutchinson speak, and some others of equal standing act, I venture to dispute their arguments. Dr. Syer Bristowe argues that consultation with a homœopath is proper, because he is the weaker vessel, and therefore we should

"Be to his faults a little blind,
And to his virtues very kind."

Will the homœopath acknowledge such inferiority? Does he not esteem his creed as that of progression? It seems to those of ordinary faith that the homœopath displays his self-taken title as a flag of defiance, just as a pirate does; and therefore he should be treated as a pirate.

It is generally admitted that the fixed data in the art of therapeutics are few and uncertain. The homœopath asserts the contrary, calls on the unlearned and ignorant to believe in his theory, and hoists his flag not for the advancement of science but for the filling of his pocket. Mr. Hutchinson would separate surgery from medicine, and divorce those which should be indissolubly joined together. Yet Mr. Hutchinson writes on purely medical topics as gout, rheumatism, skin disease, &c. The question between the homœopath and the ordinary medical practitioner is ethical. The science of medicine is advanced by honest work—is retarded by unproved theories, however specious to the unwary. The practice of medicine will have no true light thrown on it by will-o'-the-wisp fires.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

August, 1881.

H. F. S.

THE APOTHECARIES' SOCIETY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your leading article of last week in reference to the motion I proposed—namely, "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the Apothecaries' Society of London should retain all the rights that it at present enjoys," you mention, truly, that I based it upon the great service done by the Society in the past. Why, then, ignore an Examining Body of proved and indisputable utility, whose present examiners are men of the highest position and attainments, for others

of more recent date? I believe the title "Apothecaries" has more to do with the present change of opinion than ought else; for now that the Apothecaries' Society has ceased to be a trading body there can be no other excuse.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

August, 1881.

J. WICKHAM BARNES.

IRELAND.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE report of the President of the Queen's College, Cork, for the session 1880-81, has not yet been published, but I understand that the number of new students entered last session was 125 as compared with 105 in the year preceding; while the total number of students amounted to 327, or an increase of 27. The President regards the intermediate system of education as calamitous, having accomplished absolutely nothing for the interests of real education, as, indeed, the plan of paying boys for learning, instead of paying teachers to teach and to undertake the instruction of those who would voluntarily come forward, is in itself inimical to higher education, and is scarcely sufficient to induce any high promotion of knowledge, and of true education and mental development; but, on the contrary, degrades the whole public education of the country to an artifice of cram and examination. In the case especially of candidates for entrance to the medical profession, he remarks, who merely want to acquire enough to open the door of the College to them, the standard of knowledge acquired is very low; and in the case of sixteen of the boys whom the authorities were obliged to reject, most of them were extremely ignorant, and must have been neglected at school. To such a point has this proceeded that the schools no longer exist for any definite purpose, except, perhaps, to secure payment by results. There is no organisation or system, and its worst evils will be intensified when the examining edifice is crowned by an examining university introduced to provide for the wants of a new type of bread-scholars. The results of now feeding these institutions with students, crammed or neglected as the case may be, are, that when the youths enter the College they are so badly prepared in the ordinary instruments of thought, and in fact in nearly every element of school instruction, that it is a long time before they learn even how to work; so that the professor is either lecturing over their heads, or is compelled to hold back to wait for them. The examination fever, moreover, has so penetrated and invested their minds, that it has extinguished the very germs of enthusiasm for knowledge for its own sake, and left no thought for anything which does not directly "pay."

The promotion of a Veterinary College in this country has not been lost sight of, and great praise is due to Dr. Lyons, the member for Dublin, for his exertions in this respect. He has devoted considerable attention to the subject, and is endeavouring by every means to carry out the proposed scheme. Dr. Lyons has recently brought the matter under the notice of Parliament, and has been informed by Mr. Forster that it was under the careful and anxious consideration of the Government. Lord Aberdare's Bill has been amended by a clause which will provide examiners for the students of any Veterinary School that may be instituted in Ireland, but does not prevent the establishment of an independent licensing college in Ireland, which is much required.

The death-rate in Dublin last week was as low as 14.9 per 1000 inhabitants, and it can hardly be doubted that the gradual decrease which has recently taken place may be principally attributed to the removal of several hundred tenemental dwellings which were injurious to health. Great praise must be given to the indefatigable exertions of Dr. Cameron, superintendent medical officer of health, by whose energy and sanitary skill so much good has been effected, and so many unsuitable habitations have been swept away.

I may mention that Mr. William Mac Cormac, upon whom the honour of knighthood is to be conferred, is a graduate in medicine, a member of the Senate of the Queen's University in Ireland, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He is also consulting surgeon to the Belfast Royal Hospital, of which town he is a native.