years at a London hospital (taking four prizes during the time), and then went to Paris for a year, where I followed a systematic course of lectures and hospital practice, after which I returned, and got the appointment of house-surgeon to a large provincial hospital containing upwards of 130 beds. When I had been there for two or three years, I thought I should like to go up for the fellowship. I accordingly looked at the rules, found I had attended all the lectures required, and had had six years' hospital practice. I had observed a footnote in the bye-laws of the College, which said, "No provincial hospital will be recognised by the College which contains less than 100 beds, and no metropolitan hospital which contains less than 150 beds;" and presuming that, as I was in a provincial hospital containing more than thirty beds over and above the 100 required by the College, I should be all right, I wrote up, stating my intention, and furnishing all the necessary requirements, when, alas! I found I had been at the wrong place—the hospital I was in was "not recognised by the College," and so they could not admit me. I then wrote and explained that the number of cases, medical and surgical (the latter especially), was very much greater where I was than at the nearest hospital recognised by the College, and hoped that, as I had had a more ample opportunity of acquiring surgical knowledge than even at a recognised hospital, I should be admitted to the examination. The application was laid before the Council, and those venerable guardians of the interests and honour of the profession decided that they could not depart from their rules and regulations, and therefore I could not be admitted to the examination. The hospital was not recognised "because a sufficient number of cubic feet of air was not allowed for each patient."

I felt at the time that it was a great absurdity to refuse to allow me to compete for the fellowship because my professional knowledge had been acquired in rather too small a building; but when I see men who have not acquired "any knowledge at all, either from lectures or attendance at any hospital, large or small," made equal to myself in degree, the feeling is changed to one of utter disgust for a College that can perpetrate such a glaring inconsistency, and evince such want of faith towards its members.

I enclose my card, and remain, Sir, yours truly,
April, 1860. A COUNTY HOSPITAL SURGEON.

IODIDE OF POTASSIUM IN LARGE DOSES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The discrepant opinions and statements of medical men with regard to the action of iodine and its compounds must not a little perplex many of your readers.

Dr. Headland states, in his invaluable work "On the Action of Medicines," that a medical man denied altogether the power of iodide of potassium, because he himself had frequently taken a scruple, and sometimes a drachm at once, without effect. Mr. Lizars, of Edinburgh, gives this drug in very large doses, and he states without producing iodism. On the other hand, most practitioners consider ten grains a large dose.

From your report of the proceedings before the Académie de Médecine in Paris, the same difference of opinion seems to exist amongst continental practitioners.

How can we reconcile these varied statements? Is it not true that men who take up a particular theory look for facts to bear them out in it, while they overlook or nullify those which point to an opposite conclusion? This may be one cause of error. The source, however, on which I lay the greatest stress is in the mode of administration; for though ten grains, or less, given at once, may cause unpleasant symptoms, a tolerance of the remedy may be obtained by commencing with small doses, gradually increased. I have tried the effect of very large doses on myself, the results of which I give below.

As a guarantee for the genuineness of the drug, I may state that it was obtained from Mr. Mackay, and Messrs. Duncan and Flockhart, Edinburgh, and Mr. Smith, of this place.

I commenced with two-grain doses, thrice a day, increased by one grain every third day. When I had attained to 100 grains per dose, I intermitted its use for a fortnight, and recommenced with ten grains, increasing the dose by five grains every third day until I was taking an ounce per day. I thought it needless to go beyond this. The large doses were taken in six ounces of water. Beyond slight catarrhal symptoms, the effect was *nil*.

When I performed this experiment,—if such it can be called,—I had no prejudice to contend with or mislead. I was not in practice, had formed no opinion, and had no theory to

maintain. I am aware that "one swallow does not constitute a summer;" yet I think I am fairly entitled to give some opinion on the subject.

All medical men are agreed that iodide of potassium, in small doses, is a drug all-powerful for good in a great many diseases; and the conclusion I have come to is, that even if not injurious, these large doses are unnecessary; and until we have further proof to the contrary, I should hesitate to prescribe them in private practice.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Cheltenham, April, 1860. R. S. SISSON, M.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS AND THE POOR-LAW BOARD.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—May I ask you to find room in your valuable journal for the following extract from a letter which the University authorities have just received from the assistant-secretary to the Poor-law Board?

"I am directed to state that the evidence now before the Board is sufficient to satisfy them that a person possessing a diploma from the University of St. Andrews is legally qualified to practise medicine. To that extent, therefore, such persons will be eligible to hold the office of Poor-law medical officer, under the order of the Board dated the 10th of December, 1859."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
April, 1860. GEORGE E. DAY, M.D.,
Professor of Medicine.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF CIRCUMCISION?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A very interesting question suggests itself in reference to this subject. Has the operation of circumcision any effect in diminishing the habit or practice of onanism amongst the male children and the young lads of the Jewish community? Practising in a neighbourhood where this community abounds, I do not remember ever having had either a confessed or even a suspected case of this description amongst our Hebrew brethren. I wish I could say the same respecting juvenile Christians. The much less liability the male Jews must have to "a deposit of sebaceous secretion under the prepuce and around the corona glandis" removes, of course, one cause of this evil. What is Mr. Johnson's experience on this point? What is the experience on this point of those medical gentlemen who practise to a great extent amongst the Hebrew class of society?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Bishopsgate-street Without, April, 1860. ROBERT FOWLER, M.D. Edin.

THE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS AND UNEDUCATED CANDIDATES.

[The North Staffordshire Medical Registration Association have forwarded the subjoined memorial to the Medical Council:—]

To the Members of the Medical Council of the United Kingdom.

GENTLEMEN,—Having heard with surprise and regret that the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons have admitted to examination and granted diplomas to persons who have in no way complied with their regulations laid down for the course of study and hospital attendance, and having also seen that the Royal College of Surgeons justify their proceedings by complaining of the highly-penal clauses of the new Medical Act,—

We, "The North Staffordshire Medical Registration Association," beg to protest against such proceedings, on the following grounds:—

1st. That this Society considers the new Medical Act to be a great boon and protection to the profession, that it has been obtained with great difficulty, and deserves the warmest support both from the profession and the Royal College of Surgeons, whereas this act of the latter materially tends to neutralize its effects.

2ndly. That it greatly depreciates the value of the diplomas of the Royal College of Surgeons, which is in itself a great act