be argued that a medical man having a long round of visits before him may refuse to attend an urgent message unless and until this patient first points out how the day's work can be satisfactorily gone through. Surely such interference would be laughed at and treated as an act of impertinence. I am of opinion that this applies equally to the College of Surgeons, and that it rests with the Council to consider how to advance the interests of the members when once the latter have made known their grievances and desires.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

M. CLIFFORD, M.R.C.S. Eng.

Warrington-gardens, April 22nd, 1885.

The following letter has been addressed to the Honorary Secretaries of the Association of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons of England:—

Dulwich, April 21st, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your invitation to attend a meeting of the Association of Members of the Royal College of Surgeons of England on May 5th, I am afraid that, as I do not approve of the separation of Fellows and Members into hostile camps (for which, I am bound to say, your Association is not wholly responsible), my presence at your meeting would hardly help you, unless indeed you are prepared to take steps for co-operating with the Association of Fellows, in which case I would gladly assist. It appears to me, as I believe it does to others, that the resolutions passed at the meeting held at the College in March, 1884, afford a basis on which Fellows and Members ought to be able to work for the common good. Those resolutions asked, *inter alia*, for the following important reforms:—(1) That the Fellows and Members should be invested with a larger share in the management of the College; (2) that no important alteration should be made in the constitution or relations of the College without the consent of the Fellows and Members; (3) that there should be an annual meeting of Fellows and Members, at which the annual report of the Council should be presented, received, and adopted. Had the Fellows and Members, since the meeting unitedly adhered to this moderate programme, there can, I think, be no doubt that the Council would have been ere this forced to yield; but dividing into two Associations, each bent upon securing as much for its own order as possible, the interests of the profession fell an easy prey to those who believe in the ancient maxim, *divide et impera*, and the Council of the College has been able for a whole year to act as if it had never accepted any of these proposals, not even the third, in a modified form, or as if its acceptance of that proposal was one of those inoperative resolutions which Mr. Marshall told us the Council is in the habit of passing. As there may possibly be some both in your own Association and among the Fellows who will agree with me in thinking that our true policy, in view of the determined hostility of the Council and officials of the College to all reform, should be to seek union rather than to divide our powers, I shall send a copy of this letter to the medical papers.

I am, dear Sirs, faithfully yours,

H. NELSON HARDY.

The Hon. Secs., Association of Members, Royal Coll. Surg., Eng.

THE CHELTENHAM APPOINTMENT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As one of the candidates for the above appointment, allow me to thank you for the paragraph in your last issue, in addition to the fact, which you lay stress upon, that Mr. Roch possessed only one qualification at the time of his appointment, there are other objections to the election, which it is well the thirty-four candidates should know.

1. The advertisement required that applications for the office should state age, residence, and *qualifications*. The gentleman elected did *not* state his qualification (M.R.C.S., 1854), but merely added to his name Deputy Surgeon-General.

2. The notification to the Local Government Board, instead of being made within seven days, was delayed by the Sanitary Authority (or rather, as it really was, the Mayor and Town Clerk) for three weeks, during which time the gentleman elected obtained, after *special* examination of an oral character only, and for which no curriculum is required, a licence in medicine from a college in Ireland, the value of

which, as you rightly say, "can best be judged of by the circumstances under which it is procured."

3. One of the applications for the office was never opened or considered. There can be no doubt that this election was conducted in a slovenly manner. The Public Health Committee and the Town Clerk (to whom a selection of six candidates was delegated) appear never to have considered the qualifications of the several applicants, the Town Clerk ruling that this was only necessary in the case of the elected one, the consequence being that the majority of the Town Council, in voting for Mr. Roch, thought they were supporting a gentleman at least as well qualified as the other five candidates, and his want of legal qualification was never discovered until after his election; further, if one application was never opened, the inference is that others shared the same fate.

I am pleased to find that several of the candidates contemplate taking further action, and I shall be glad to join in any movement for testing the legality of the appointment. The best thing, however, in my opinion, would be—if I might venture to suggest such a course—for the gentleman elected to resign and submit his claims, now that he is fully qualified, for re-election.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

April 20th, 1885.

A GRADUATE.

THE MEDICAL BILL AND THE SCOTCH UNIVERSITIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you kindly allow me to correct a mistake into which I fell in my letter of the 14th inst.? I find on reference to the journals of the House that the Medical Act Amendment Bill was exempted in the first instance from the general massacre of the innocents, and was only withdrawn at a later date, when it became evident that it would be hopeless to attempt to do anything beyond absolutely necessary work in an expiring session. I feel that this explanation is due to Sir William Jenner, whose knowledge of the detail of the question was really greater than mine, but from whose conclusions I still venture to dissent; and whilst thanking you, Sir, for your personal expressions of courtesy, I must, with all respect, continue to express my dissent from the views which you so ably advocate.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Reform Club, April 22nd, 1885.

R. FARQUHARSON.

SMALL-POX AT SALVATION ARMY BARRACKS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of last week a correspondent states that small-pox is now, and has for some time past been, very prevalent among the persons residing in the barracks of the Salvation Army, Clapton, and that scarcely a day has passed without some patient being removed. This is absolutely untrue. Since the barracks have been opened at Clapton, three years ago, there have been in all twelve cases; seven this year, three in 1884, and two in 1883. Every care is taken to prevent infection spreading; on the slightest suspicious symptom the cadet is isolated (in a room kept on purpose for infectious cases), and as soon as small-pox is pronounced the patient is at once removed to the hospital at Highgate. Every precaution as regards disinfection is taken after a case has occurred. So far there has been no spread of the disease in the barracks, the cases being isolated ones. In one case the disease was evidently caught at Plymouth, as symptoms of small-pox appeared within a week of the patient's arrival at Clapton. A matron and a certificated hospital trained nurse have the cadets under their constant supervision, and are prompt in isolating any one showing the slightest suspicious symptom of any infectious disorder; and, considering the number of persons residing in the barracks (over 300), and how prevalent small-pox has been in the immediate neighbourhood, in my opinion the army is to be congratulated that there have not been more cases. Either the matron, the nurse, or the medical officer, will be very happy to show any qualified medical man over the barracks.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

FRED. H. SPOONER, M.D.,

Lower Clapton, April 21st, 1885. Med. Off. of the Salvation Army.