

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your worthy contemporary of the *Medical and Surgical Journal* must, I conceive, have the organ of combativeness powerfully developed, else he would not occasionally run a muck at different classes of his professional brethren.—a few weeks ago tilting at the general practitioners (from which, I believe, has resulted the stationary state of his “subscription list” of late), and in his last number at the Glasgow graduates in medicine. Of these gentlemen, many of whom occupy the first situations in the profession in every part of the British dominions, he has asserted that they are far inferior in learning and respectability to the Edinburgh graduates in medicine, and that the examinations for the doctorate at Glasgow are not so strict as those at the London Hall, than which statements more illiberal and mendacious never were made by any journalist. He is the first public writer that ever made such an assertion; and as an alumnus of both universities, and biassed in favour of neither, I affirm that he might with equal truth have stated that Glasgow was inferior to Edinburgh in size and population, or in the commercial spirit and intelligence of its inhabitants. The curriculum of studies required of candidates for the doctorate is, I believe, precisely the same in both universities; so also is the duration of the session, and the medical professors are equally eminent and distinguished; indeed, Thompson, Burn, Millar, Jeffrey, &c., need not shrink from a comparison with their brethren of the Edinburgh, or any other university. The Glasgow University, unlike those of Aberdeen and St. Andrew, has never, at least in modern times, conferred degrees in medicine on rich quacks, or half-educated general practitioners, who proffered the price of a diploma with a recommendation from any two physicians. Like the Edinburgh, the Glasgow University requires previous resident study of candidates for the degree of M.D., and I can assure your contemporary that the examinations are by no means pro forma. I had previously passed the ordeal of the London Royal College of Surgeons, and the Army Medical Board, for the situation of surgeon to the forces; and though at both the examiners had faithfully discharged their duties to the public, I can with truth assert, that in the private examinations which I underwent from the Glasgow professors, previous graduation, my medical knowledge was still more severely tested. I am far from asserting

that candidates, prepared by the grinders, do not occasionally pass their examinations, who are by no means doctissimi, but I am confident that this occurs just as frequently at Edinburgh as at Glasgow. The only difference between the two universities, as to graduation in medicine, is, I believe, this:—At Edinburgh the inaugural thesis must be printed;—at Glasgow, publication, though it frequently occurs, is left to the option of the candidate. Now, in this instance, the Glasgow professors, I conceive, evince their good sense; for, as very few inaugural theses are remembered a month after graduation even by their authors, much less are considered, afterwards, worthy of being referred to, like the learned thesis “*De genere humano ejusque varietatibus*,”—their indiscriminate publication can only benefit printers, trunkmakers, &c., and tend to foment the “*cacoethes scribendi et imprimendi*,” which, Mr. Editor, you, I presume, have every week sufficient proofs is quite unnecessary.

Is your contemporary editor aware, that the Glasgow Royal Infirmary is second to none, even in this metropolis, in the wide field which it presents for the acquisition of practical knowledge, in the excellence of its arrangements, and particularly of the clinical lectures, many proofs of which have appeared in all the modern periodicals? Is he ignorant of the unrivalled opportunities for the cultivation of morbid anatomy, which the students have in their ready access to the Hunterian Museum—the noblest of the kind, perhaps, in the world? One circumstance, indeed, should have obtained for the Glasgow University some respect from the obstetric professor;—it set the example to Edinburgh of requiring from candidates for the degree of M.D., a knowledge of midwifery and the diseases of children.

During the meridian fame of the Monroes, Cullen, and Gregory, the Edinburgh University for medical education might justly be reckoned the first in the world; but the prestiges of those great men have disappeared, and their mantles are not considered to have fallen—at least in every instance—on their successors. As a medical school, the Edinburgh University neither claims, nor has it any right to claim, for its graduates, the slightest precedence over those of Glasgow.

The only reason, I conceive, why the Edinburgh University should be considered at all superior is, that it has the distinguished honour of having enrolled on the list of its graduates the name of Dr. Mick Ryan. I have the honour, &c.

J. KINNIER.

East Road, July 22, 1833.