

stitutions generally less than the country druggists, owing to there being less risk in payment. He would, therefore, submit as the best system, that they should send for stated samples and the prices of such quantities as might be necessary for six months' consumption. Since that statute was enacted, they had a dispenser able to compound many of the articles formerly prepared for use by the druggists; also, a house-surgeon at an increased salary. Surely, then, it was time to alter the present system, when they had officers capable, if unrestricted by the 84th rule, of assisting the Directors in making purchases at the best markets, with more than twenty medical trustees and officers of the charity to assist them. It must be obvious to all that free competition under careful superintendence was best calculated to ensure the lowest prices, and at the same time genuine articles.

E. EDWARDS, Esq. having seconded the motion, after some short discussion, Mr. Thomas Blunt said that he had taken the bill for drugs and chemicals for one quarter, sent in by his house to the infirmary, and recast all the items at the prices charged by the London house, and that the difference in the amount of the bill so made out, and the amount actually charged, fell short of 4*l*.

Mr. WHITNEY and Mr. CARTWRIGHT, the late house-surgeon, also addressed the meeting; and some personal allusions being made likely to renew the scene which took place at the last meeting, Sir B. Leighton proposed as an amendment, "That the drugs be purchased only of operative chemists (not being more than three in number), if they can supply the same."—This was seconded by the Rev. H. Burton, who stated that the head physician of one of the London hospitals had recently advised him to give the preference to a good resident practical chemist, rather than to a London wholesale druggist. This alteration meeting Dr. Johnson's approbation, the Directors having thereby the power to buy at the best markets, either in London or Shrewsbury, he withdrew his motion, and the amendment was carried unanimously.

THE ERGOT OF RYE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have from time to time witnessed with regret some communications in your independent and enlightened Journal on the action of ergot, from Mr. Wardleworth, of Rochdale, in which, if wonderful success were dependent on unhesitating assumption and unwarranted conclusions, the right of possession, without precedent, would be awarded to him; but I can advance some facts which would prove that the 1500 cases in which he has used the ergot can be only shadows which exist in his prolific imagina-

tion. Mr. Wardleworth has not been a licentiate of the Apothecaries' Hall for more than six months, and I leave you to judge whether any practitioner *could* attend this number of patients in that period, in private practice, setting aside his having administered the ergot in fifteen hundred cases. His apprenticeship was passed with Mr. Ogden, a clever obstetrician, and a respectable practitioner, and though he is an old practitioner, I dare venture, from good authority, to say that Mr. Ogden never administered the drug so often in his whole life. I am an advocate of the ergot in some cases, but would deprecate its abuse as ruinous both to the mother and child. Mr. Wardleworth's having used the ergot in bronchitis is nothing new; the ergot has been tried in Göttingen in bronchitis, gonorrhœa, gleet, and leucorrhœa, with variable effects, and the conclusions arrived at are that it is inferior to other remedies in those disorders.

I should not have been so personal * had not a sense of duty to the junior branches of the profession imperatively called for the truth for their guidance, rather than that they should follow the sweeping conclusions of Mr. Wardleworth. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE SIMPSON,

Manchester, May 10th, 1839.

ACTION OF IODINE IN SCROFULA.

MARIE C—, twelve years of age, had been an inmate of the Children's Hospital Paris, since October, 1826, when she came under the care of M. Baudelocque, on the 1st of April, 1831. The upper part of the neck, from one mastoid process to the other was surrounded by a chain of hardened scrofulous tumours, without any change in the colour of the skin. The principal mass occupied the right side, beneath and behind the ear. Behind the chin, and above the os hyoides, there was a tumour of the size of a small egg, with two fistulous orifices on either side, which gave issue to pus. Each axilla was filled by a round, indolent tumour, as large as a turkey-egg. The left arm was much emaciated, and not more than one-third the size of the opposite limb. The skin covering it was rough, and the epidermis thrown off in the form of small scales. Several deep white cicatrices surrounded the elbow-joint, which was partially immoveable. A part of the first phalanx of the little finger was destroyed, and the two other phalanges were greatly tumefied. The right shoulder-joint was,

* We have taken the liberty to alter one or two of Mr. Simpson's remarks, to remove the charge of personality, and diminish controversy.—ED. L.