

M. Malgaigne has, we read, resigned his office of surgeon to La Charité, intending to devote himself exclusively to his course of operative surgery.

Special Correspondence.

EDINBURGH.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

THE session of the University was opened by the principal with an able address, mostly on the Science of Physiognomy and the Views of Dr. Carus; which, however, were not of special interest to the members of our profession. The number of students matriculated seems to be about the average; but the medical classes are smaller than usual. The election of Lord Rector a few days ago occasioned considerable excitement in the student world; the claims of Mr. Stirling of Keir being supported by one large section; while those of Mr. Gladstone were maintained by another. The votes were taken in the several class-rooms by the professors; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was reelected by a considerable majority.

The session of the Extra-academical Medical School was opened by Dr. Matthews Duncan with an able and interesting address on subjects of much interest to the medical student, but scarcely demanding notice here.

Dr. Gairdner's removal to the chair of Practice of Medicine in the University of Glasgow caused a vacancy in the physicianship to the Royal Infirmary, to which Dr. Rutherford Haldane, the pathologist, was appointed; while Dr. Grainger Stewart was appointed to the pathologistship. Dr. Haldane has commenced to lecture upon the Practice of Physic and Clinical Medicine. Before leaving, Dr. Gairdner was entertained at a public dinner by upwards of seventy of his professional friends, who thus desired to mark their appreciation of his merits. Now-a-days, the Glasgow people seem entitled to lay it down as a law that medical professors come, like the sun, from the east, as each vacant chair in their university is regularly filled by an Edinburgh lecturer. They have had Allen Thomson for Anatomy, Anderson for Chemistry, Lister for Surgery, and now Gairdner for Medicine. It is to be hoped that the students will not follow these distinguished teachers; and, indeed, it is not much to be dreaded so long as we retain the noble staff of professors who adorn our university.

There has been a great movement of late in municipal circles regarding the propriety of appointing an officer of public health, which ended in the appointment of Dr. Littlejohn, the Police Surgeon, and Lecturer on Medical Jurisprudence, to the post. Whether an official already very abundantly supplied with work was the most suitable individual to select may be doubted; but unquestionably the appointment was a good one; and, if a man of thorough activity can fulfil the duties of both offices, Dr. Littlejohn will do it. His first report, which was published a few days since, amply proved the necessity which existed for the appointment of such an officer; for it showed that small-pox of a malignant type was raging in many of the poorer localities of the city, and

even to some extent among the better ranks. It recommended what is certainly of great importance and very desirable—the Compulsory Vaccination Act; an advantage which, your English readers may be surprised to hear, we do not enjoy in Scotland. The disease has broken out with considerable virulence in the Castle, and has affected many of the soldiers; and the managers of the various hospitals for the education of youth are taking every precaution to prevent its introduction into these institutions.

The first meeting of the Medico-Chirurgical Society was held on November 26th; and though the attendance was but scanty, the business was interesting. Mr. Spence, one of the surgeons to the Royal Infirmary, read an account of a case of amputation at the hip-joint which he had performed successfully in July last. The patient was a young woman who had suffered for some time from malignant disease in nearly the lower two-thirds of the femur. The disease was situated between the bone and the periosteum, and infiltrated the substance of the bone. She was weak, exhausted, suffered constant pain, but there was no affection of the glands; so that an operation seemed necessary. To secure immunity from the risk of the upper part of the bone being affected, and subsequently developing malignant disease, amputation was performed at the hip-joint. Of the amputation itself, there is little to be said, except that Professor Lister's tourniquet for compressing the abdominal aorta was used with marked success; and that the operation was performed in a brilliant manner. The patient made an excellent recovery, and is now enjoying good health. Dr. Gillespie, another of our hospital surgeons, gave an interesting account of a case of fracture of the sternum and abscess in the anterior mediastinum, with comminuted fracture of the lower jaw, followed by pyæmia, terminating in recovery. A question arose in the course of the discussion as to whether pyæmia had really existed in this case; one of the surgeons seeming to maintain that a fatal termination was a necessary symptom of that disease. As most authorities do not concur in this view, and as the symptoms of depression, feverishness, rigors, perspirations, feeble pulse, and the formation of secondary abscesses, were well-marked in this instance, there seems little reason to doubt that pyæmia really existed.

Mr. Syme has recently had some very interesting operations in the Royal Infirmary; of which the most remarkable was one in which he removed the entire scapula for a malignant tumour of large size seated in that bone. He had formerly, in the same patient, removed the head of the humerus on that side for malignant disease. At that time the scapula showed no trace of disease. Mr. Syme was for some time uncertain whether to remove the arm along with the scapula or not; but eventually decided upon leaving the arm, which showed no trace of disease, and which, Mr. Syme expected, might still prove serviceable to the patient; the shock of the operation, moreover, he imagined, would be less. Hitherto, the progress of the case has been, on the whole, satisfactory, and it is to be hoped that the patient will make a good recovery.