

MANCHESTER.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

Technical Education.—Victoria University.—Combe Lectures.

A LARGE and influential meeting on the subject of "Technical Education" was held in Manchester last week. Professor Huxley was the chief speaker. Shortly before the meeting, it was announced that the trustees of the late Sir Joseph Whitworth had bought a large area of ground for £47,000, which they were willing to present to the city, part of the ground to form a site for a technical school and school of art. The subject has taken firm root in Manchester, and already it is being advocated that the supposed surplus of funds from the Jubilee Exhibition should be devoted to the advancement of technical education.

The Court of Victoria University have sanctioned the acceptance of the certificates of those students of Victoria University who have passed the Preliminary Scientific Examination of the University of London, provided they have attended the necessary classes, and further satisfy the Board of studies in any preliminary examination in science which may not be included in the corresponding examination of London University. This regulation is to apply for a period of five years.

The final lecture of the present course of Combe Lectures on the "Physiology of Motion" was delivered by Professor Stirling on Tuesday night, November 29th, when the results of the examination were announced. These lectures have been largely attended, and throughout they have been illustrated by numerous experiments.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

OUR correspondents are reminded that prolixity is a great bar to publication, and, with the constant pressure upon every department of the JOURNAL, brevity of style and conciseness of statement greatly facilitate early insertion. We are compelled to return and hold over a great number of communications, chiefly by reason of their unnecessary length.

MEDICAL MEN AND COUNTER PRACTICE.

SIR,—While the profession as a whole endeavours to prevent unqualified persons from practising, it is strange that individual members of it should take an opposite course. About a fortnight ago I received the following letter from a medical man in a large provincial town:

"Dear Sir,—Be kind enough to let me have prospectus *re* lectures on eye affections connected with the Roy. Westminster Ophthalmic (*sic*) Hospital.—Yours very truly, ———, M.D."

I wrote a letter in reply explaining fully the arrangements for clinical instruction at the hospital in question, and on Thursday last I received a visit from a jeweller residing in the same town as my correspondent, who brought with him my letter, and stated that, wishing to learn how to test persons for glasses, he had been advised by my correspondent to apply to me.

Now, I attach no blame to the jeweller. Like others in his business, he wished to announce in his window that he had "Spectacles to Suit all Sights," but being more conscientious or more astute than others, he preferred either to understand what he was doing or to lead the public to suppose that he did. I believe that his motives were honest, and that it had not occurred to him, till I mentioned the fact, that the eyes were part of the human body, and as such were liable to many diseases, some of local origin, others depending on general conditions, and that the recognition of these required medical knowledge, and their treatment involved a serious responsibility. He evidently looked upon these organs merely as optical appliances for seeing through, and therefore only subject to defects which could be corrected by optical appliances.

But I must confess that it is to me incomprehensible that a medical man should advise a tradesman, who has no medical education, to diagnose and treat affections of an organ of whose structure and functions he is alike ignorant. I cannot see that the case would have been materially different had he advised a chemist to attend the practice of a general hospital in order that he might learn to prescribe for general ailments—I am, etc.,

W. ADAMS FROST.

17, Queen Anne Street, W., December 3rd, 1887.

THE B.M. EXAMINATION, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

SIR,—We have so seldom to speak against the fairness and the advanced character of the B.M. Examinations of the London University that you will kindly devote a little space for a word or two on the following points:—I think, and most dermatologists will agree with me, that diagnosis of skin disease off-hand in a dark room by a dim gaslight is not fairly representative of knowledge in this branch of medical science, and yet one may fail in this examination from making mistakes under such circumstances, as I know from experience. Another point which I have requested to be brought under the notice of the Senate is that a candidate who had passed in one subject in a previous examination, after several years of practical and theoretical study of the same subject, fails in it at a subsequent examination. This, of course, only shows that the examiners are not infallible, and they lay much more stress on particular points of the answer than on a good, thorough, general knowledge of the candidate. This also I know from experience. I shall be glad to submit further particulars if required.—I am, etc.,

AN UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE.

November 26th, 1887.

THE EXAMINATION QUESTION.

SIR,—It is exceedingly satisfactory to students to see that in your JOURNAL it is possible to ventilate grievances for which redress ought to be, and with ease could be, found.

A correspondent recently spoke of the "bare unfurnished room" at the Examination Hall in which many a student has to pass more than one dreary hour in anticipation of a ten minutes' *visà voce*. I most heartily endorse what he says, and will, with your permission, add a few words to it. This I do not as one of the unfortunate "rejected" ones, but with the comfortable satisfaction of having appeared in a late M.B. list as one who has finished with all the most trying examinations, and whose only wish is that they may be rendered in this respect less trying to those who follow after.

I would not pretend to deny that the medical student is not infinitely better looked after now than in former years. In the system of teaching, perfection is aimed at; why not in examination? When a man has been carefully taught for four, five, or six years, why should he be handicapped at the most critical time in his curriculum by being placed under circumstances the most adverse to coolness and collectedness? I think we have a right to demand more than ordinary instead of less than ordinary consideration at this time; we should insist on being treated like gentlemen, and not like cattle. Is it too much to ask that the authorities should exercise at least a little ingenuity to minimise the necessary waiting for each candidate? Or if, owing to the repetition of the same question to each candidate, it is essential that the incoming and outgoing candidates should not meet, is it Utopian to ask for a carpet, a comfortable chair, or even a "silence" room, in place of bare boards, hard chairs, and noise?

These remarks apply not only to the Examination Hall—whose authorities might plead that there has been no time since June to put a carpet down—but also to the London University, far famed for the little that it offers beyond hard work and an alternative between degrees and disappointments.

Personally I am not nervous, and have never had the misfortune to be rejected at a *visà voce*; but I have known men whose examinations have been spoiled by the utter want of comfort which the examination waiting room supplies to the weary student, and to my mind such a possibility is a proof of mismanagement, capable, fortunately, of redress.—I am, etc.,

JOHN O. TUNSTALL, M.B.

Russell Square, W.C.

DIAGNOSIS OF UNILATERAL PYONEPHROSIS.

SIR,—My attention has just been called to your report of the meeting of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society on November 22nd, in which I am stated to have referred to a proposal for testing, when one kidney is known to be diseased, the soundness of the other by passing a small tube from the bladder into each ureter separately. I must ask you to correct this, as I should certainly not have made any mention of so absurd a proposition. What I said and what I referred to was a proposal "to occlude the orifice of each ureter separately by means of an instrument like a small lithotrite."

I did not further explain that if this can really be done without injury, the bladder will contain the secretion from one kidney only, which will afford some indication as to the healthy or unhealthy state of that organ.—I am, etc.,

RICHARD BARWELL.

55, Wimpole Street, Cavendish Square.