Board send ambulances to bring both the mother and baby to the hospital.

It is of the utmost importance for the sake of the children's health and also for the successful treatment of the disease in infants who are not accompanied by the mothers that they should be placed in open-air wards specially built for the purpose, which could not well be provided at any general hospital without building; also isolation wards have to be provided, both for the sake of the child and the mother.

With regard to the teaching of students, it seems to me that there ought to be no more difficulty in their attending St. Margaret's Hospital, which they do not do at present, than any of the fever hospitals as they do during the course of their training.—I am, etc.,

London, W., March 7th. M. S. MAYOU.

GENERAL OEDEMA OF THE FOETUS.

SIR,—May I be permitted to call attention to the report (BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, March 17th, p. 470) of some remarks made by me at a meeting of the North of England Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society, and to point out that they give expression to an opinion with which I do not agree? The histological appearance of the liver in general oedema of the foetus is certainly suggestive of leukaemia, and some of the earlier writers believed the condition to be of this nature. More recent observers, however, have shown that the small round cells seen in great numbers in the liver and elsewhere are not white blood cells, but are nucleated erythrocytes. The condition is not, therefore, a leukaemia, though at first glance this mistake might easily be made.—I am, etc.,

Liverpool, March 18th. NORMAN B. CAPON.

THE RIGHTS OF A REGISTERED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER.

SIR,—The retired practitioner has been discriminated against before. In a lunacy certificate there is this clause: "I am a person registered under the Medical Act, 1858, and I am in the actual practice of the medical profession." I have always regarded this as an infringement of the privileges of the profession.—I am, etc.,

Rotherham, March 18th. GILBERT E. MOULD.

SIR,—Is the distinction between a practitioner in actual practice and one not in actual practice quite an innovation? It is found in the "Certificate of Medical Practitioner," Lunacy Act, 1890, Second Schedule, Form 8. I am not sure that anyone knows what it really means. It should certainly not be put into any more Acts or Regulations.—I am, etc.,

Birmingham, March 20th. WALTER R. JORDAN.

Universities and Colleges.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

NOTICE is given that among members of the Senate vacating office next May is Dr. T. D. Lister, elected by the graduates of medicine. Nominations should be sent to the Clerk of Convocation, at the University, not later than April 4th. Dr. Lister is eligible for re-election.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

OWING to the death of the Registrar, Sir Joseph McGrath, LL.D., the meeting of the Senate on March 16th was adjourned to March 27th, and a resolution of regret and sympathy was passed unanimously and ordered to be transmitted to the family.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

Council Election.

THE following Fellows are candidates for election to the Council: Sir Herbert Furnivall Waterhouse (F. 1890); James Berry (F. 1885); John Herbert Fisher (F. 1893); Herbert John Paterson, C.B.E. (F. 1897); William Sampson Handley (F. 1897); Thomas Percy Legg, C.M.G. (F. 1897); Victor Bonney (F. 1899); Donald Armour, C.M.G. (F. 1900); Percy Sargent, C.M.G., D.S.O. (F. 1900); George Ernest Gask, C.M.G., D.S.O. (F. 1901); George Grey Turner (F. 1903).

The death of Sir William Thorburn increases the vacancies from four to five.

Voting papers will be issued on April 3rd.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND.

THE following have been appointed to professorships in the schools of surgery: Medicine, F. C. Purser, M.D., F.R.C.P.I.; Midwifery, E. Hastings Tweedy, F.R.C.P.I.; Preventive Medicine and Medical Jurisprudence, V. M. Synge, M.D., F.R.C.P.I.

Obituary.

SIR WILLIAM THORBURN, K.B.E., F.R.C.S.,

Consulting Surgeon, Manchester Royal Infirmary.

THE announcement of the death of Sir William Thorburn on Sunday last, March 18th, will cause great regret among a wide circle of friends and old pupils. He had removed from Manchester to London only a few months ago, shortly after the death of his wife, and then appeared to be in his usual health. Although he felt severely the loss of his two sons in the war, he returned from his service with the British Mediterranean Force in apparently good health and with renewed energy. He had been ill for about two months, and his death was not unexpected by those who were closely associated with him.

William Thorburn, who was born on April 7th, 1861, was the son of Dr. John Thorburn, professor of obstetric medicine at Owens College, where William Thorburn received his medical education. He was a brilliant student. He graduated in the University of London B.Sc. in 1880, M.B., B.S. in 1884, with gold medals in medicine and obstetrical medicine and surgery, and M.D. in 1885 and the F.R.C.S. in 1886. He became house-surgeon at the Manchester Royal Infirmary in 1883, and after filling other offices was elected honorary assistant surgeon in 1889, and succeeded the late Walter Whitehead as honorary surgeon in 1900. He retired in 1921, becoming honorary consulting surgeon before his full period of service had expired, so as to be free to attend to his other duties and to allow promotion of his junior colleagues. At an early stage of his career in Manchester he came under the influence of James Ross, then working out his neurological researches at the Manchester Royal Infirmary. Thorburn directed his mind to nerve surgery and was awarded in 1890 the Jacksonian prize of the Royal College of Surgeons for his essay on the Nature and Treatment of Injuries to the Spinal Column and the consequences arising therefrom. As Hunterian professor at the College he delivered a course of lectures on the surgery of the spinal cord, which was expanded into a book published in 1889. He wrote many other papers on spinal cord and brain surgery, and he also contributed to the knowledge of the pathological results cervical rib may produce.

In the Bradshaw lecture delivered last December on the surgery of the nervous system he reviewed his experience of many years. His tone of disappointment on his results was not surprising to those who heard his conclusions on the subject of the operative treatment of traumatic epilepsy delivered at the Manchester Medical Society several years ago. Nerve and brain surgery was by no means his only interest, and he had a large practice in general operative work in Manchester. His great knowledge, fine memory, wide experience, and his powers of lucid, concise expression and ordered arrangement of material made him a great teacher; and his ward classes and clinical lectures were eagerly attended by students. His lectures and addresses were all very carefully prepared beforehand and more or less memorized.

Thorburn had, indeed, a clear thinking type of brain. At one time he took a great interest in the war game, or Kriegspiel, which was played in Volunteer circles, and he became skilful at it. He also had a good whist and bridge mind. His knowledge was pigeon-holed and card-indexed. As a speaker he was precise and had his argument arranged in logical and connected order and with no padding. In this way he conveyed the impression that he was a thorough master of the subject he was speaking on, and suggested to some the thought that he would have risen to as high an eminence at the Bar as he did in surgery had he chosen the former profession, and that his judgements would have been models of lucidity and commendable brevity. He possessed a great faculty of summing up the points of a difficult subject, and could crystallize the ideas expressed in a debate in a few well chosen and clear words. He was one of the Pelhams of life, preferring to stop before his audience had had enough of his discourse rather than to outstay his welcome. He would have made an ideal representative of the medical profession in Parliament. He was eminently fitted to command the applause of listening senates.

For many years before the war Thorburn was a much trusted adviser in the Council, the Senate, and the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Manchester, and his opinion on educational matters was highly appreciated by

his colleagues there and by those on the honorary staff of the infirmary. He took a broad-minded, sagacious, and long view of problems, picking out essentials and leaving the smaller matters to take care of themselves. His business and administrative capacities and his knowledge of detail were of much service on the subcommittee of the Board of the Manchester Royal Infirmary in planning the building of the present large and fine hospital on the pavilion plan. In later years his many calls to London interfered with his regular attention to university matters, to the great regret, not only of his fellow-workers, but also of himself, for he was always proud of his school and anxious that its students should succeed in examinations and in after-life.

During his year of office as President of the Manchester Medical Society he used his administrative and persuasive mind in helping to work out a closer agreement than already existed between the University medical library and the library of the Manchester Medical Society. This arrangement enabled the Medical Society to offer to its members a wealth of medical books and periodicals approached by no other society in the kingdom with a subscription of one guinea. The gain to the research workers of the university was also immense.

Sir William Thorburn was a member of the British Medical Association, and vice-president of the Section of Surgery at the Annual Meeting in Manchester in 1902. At the Annual Meeting in Cambridge in 1920 he opened the discussion on the end-results of injuries to the peripheral nerves treated by operation.

In recent years he took great interest in the work of the Royal College of Surgeons, both from the administrative and examining points of view, and he spent a great deal of time in London. He was on the Council for many years, and an examiner for the final examinations of the Conjoint Board and for the Fellowship of the College. He was a good and fair examiner for the average man, but did not suffer fools gladly. In recent years he examined in surgery for Oxford University. His work on spinal and nervous surgery and his great experience made him much sought after by railway companies or litigants in compensation cases, and he made an ideal scientific witness.

When the war broke out he was on the staff of the Second Western General Hospital in charge of the surgical section. Before long he went abroad as consulting surgeon to the British armies in the Mediterranean and saw service in Malta, Gallipoli, and Salonica, and he served also in France. He was a great source of strength to the officers of the R.A.M.C. in the districts where he worked. He received the C.B. (1916) and the C.M.G. and the Military K.B.E. (1919) for these services, and the honorary degree of M.D. from the University of Malta. Going away to the war in rather poor health, he came back, as he said, a new man and threw himself with renewed vigour into his professional work, especially that connected with the Royal College of Surgeons. He led a very active and busy life, and though his later years were saddened by domestic griefs he must have felt that he had fought a good fight and accomplished much. He was president of the St. Andrews Society of Manchester at the time of his death, and was deputy lieutenant for the county of Lancaster. He married Miss Melland, who, as has been said, died last year. He is survived by three daughters.

We are indebted to Mr. JOHN HOWSON RAY, assistant surgeon to the Royal Infirmary, Manchester, for the following:

In the death of Sir William Thorburn Manchester loses one of its most distinguished surgeons, and a man who had played a most important part in the development of its medical school, to which he was so devoted. As one of the pioneers in neurological surgery he will perhaps be chiefly regarded in the future, and there is no doubt that his painstaking investigations into the distribution of the peripheral spinal nerves (to which effort he was inspired largely by the late Dr. James Ross) at an early stage in his career led him to follow with undiminished interest the surgery of the central nervous system; and his last public address, the Bradshaw lecture, was on the surgery of the spinal cord. In neurological surgery Thorburn was thoroughly at home, and he displayed decided operative dexterity and resource in his laminectomies, in which he had a large measure of success. It was an inspiring sight to be present at one of Thorburn's operations on the spinal cord, where he carried out the various stages with precision, sureness, and artistic finish. In the Manchester Royal Infirmary he held many appointments in his time, and from the period when he was in charge of out-patients to that in which he had control of wards his teaching was invariably of the best, and proved of the utmost value to many generations of students. As a lecturer he was unusually clear, concise, logical, and convincing. Of good address, dignified, and courtly to a degree, and with an excellent delivery, he could hold his audience with ease, and he never failed to be interesting whatever subject came under his review. He was animated by high ideals and did much to promote the cause of education in the Medical School of Manchester, taking his full share in drawing up the modifications in the curriculum necessitated by the development of medicine.

He was an excellent organizer, an ideal chairman of committee, and he rendered an enormous service in planning the details of the new Manchester Royal Infirmary in co-operation with the late Mr. Charles Hopkinson. As chief of a surgical unit he inspired house-surgeons, surgical dressers, and nursing staff to aim at the highest standard of efficiency and encouraged originality and research. Of a rather shy and reserved nature, he did not appear to make friends readily, but once his friendship was given it was lasting and loyal, and he was a highly valued colleague in the Royal Infirmary.

In the University he had been lecturer in operative surgery and in surgical pathology, and finally occupied the chair in clinical surgery, and in each position he was entirely successful. He had very wide interests, and his advice was sought in many fields in addition to that of surgery. For many years he had been a member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, and an examiner in surgery at the College and in various universities. As an examiner he was fair-minded and reasonable, and displayed a quiet patience towards the candidate. At the outbreak of the war Thorburn was officer in charge of the Surgical Division at the 2nd Western General Hospital, but in 1915 he was appointed consulting surgeon to the Expeditionary Forces in the Mediterranean; at a later date he proceeded as a consulting surgeon to the Rouen area, and he has placed on record some of his experiences of overseas war work. On his retirement from the active staff of the Manchester Royal Infirmary in 1920 his colleagues on the Medical Board invited him to give annually a series of lectures on the surgery of the nervous system, thus marking their sense of his great service to the school, and their wish to retain the association with a colleague who had given so many years of a very active life to the work of the hospital.

JOHN IRVING, M.B., C.M.GLASG.,
Consulting Surgeon, Huddersfield Royal Infirmary.

WE regret to record the death, in the early morning of March 9th, after a week's illness, of Dr. John Irving of Huddersfield, who practised for nearly half a century in that town.

John Irving was born in 1850 at Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire, and studied medicine at the University of Glasgow. He graduated M.B., C.M. in 1873, and in the same year began his association with Huddersfield by becoming house-surgeon to the Royal Infirmary. In 1884 he was appointed honorary surgeon, and in 1905 consulting surgeon. His professional standing in the district is shown by the honours conferred upon him by his colleagues. He was twice president of the Huddersfield Medical Society and once president of the Leeds Medical Society. He had been chairman of the Huddersfield Division of the British Medical Association and a member of the local Insurance Committee from the time of its formation. Dr. Irving also took a large share in the public life of the district. He was made a justice of the peace for the borough in 1906, and carried out his duties as a magistrate to the admiration of all. On March 10th warm tributes to this work were paid by the chairman of the Bench and by the president of the Huddersfield Law Society on behalf of the solicitors practising at the borough police court. As surgeon to the local hospital, as magistrate, church officer, and member of the local St. Andrew's Society, Dr. Irving was a notable figure, respected and liked by all.

We are indebted to Sir JAMES BARR for the following appreciation:

By the death of Dr. John Irving I feel that there has been severed an unbroken friendship of half a century, which it is difficult to heal or replace, and this, I think, will be the feeling of all his old and young friends. Our friendship as students became more and more enhanced as we grew older in the battle of life. Irving, no doubt, grew in knowledge and