that it would be very injurious if their voluntary system were turned into a municipal system. They believed mostly in persuasion. It had been said that there should be considerable funds at the disposal of the central body. He had always believed that it was necessary, and that there was no disgrace in the fact; it certainly smoothed difficulties, and those institutions which deserved it would receive help. The voluntary system answered splendidly in connection with polytechnics in London; why not in hospitals? They were not relying on an unknown method, and such a course was not without precedent. The Charity Organisation Society in this matter was not seeking power and control; it was suggesting, proposing, and advancing ideas, which would be evident to anyone who consulted the original scheme. He believed there was a mean between what was called compulsion and what was the ordinary method of co-operation in voluntary work. He believed they were creating in the public mind by their voluntary and municipal work a spirit of co-operation and give-and-take, and good feeling, which would react upon their whole system, and it was to such a feeling he would prefer to trust to bring about that extremely-wanted reform in their medical charities.

The resolution was then put from the chair and carried, only two voting against.

A LOCAL UNIVERSITY FOR LONDON.

By J. KINGSTON FOWLER, M.D., F.R.C.P.,

Physician to the Middlesex Hospital.

I AM glad that you recognise that the appearance of the Westminster scheme has reawakened interest in the university question. That it would have that effect I felt confident, and that, far from tending to delay the settlement of the question, it will force on a speedy decision, is tolerably certain.

The Duke of Devonshire, speaking at the dinner of the Royal Society on the wider diffusion of scientific knowledge and the creation of a "teaching" university in London, is reported to have stated: "But strong as my own convictions or the convictions of my colleagues upon these subjects may be, I am not here to hold out to you any sanguine hope that we shall be able to induce Parliament to devote to them the attention which these subjects, in my opinion, richly deserve. Certainly not, unless we can create in the country a widespread public opinion of their importance and their necessity."

The lack of public interest in the matter is in great part due to the use of the word "teaching" instead of "local," as descriptive of the university required. A "teaching" university has been variously defined; but what the public understand by it is "a university which teaches."

Although the framers, both of the Cowper scheme and of the compromise scheme of 1897, have been desirous that the University of London should assume teaching functions and possess a professoriate of its own, the realisation of their wish obviously depends upon the capacity of the University to attract the necessary endowment. To the objector who asks, "Suppose you do not get the funds, what then?" no satisfactory answer can, so far as I see, be given. If the endowment necessary for a professoriate be not forthcoming the University will not be a teaching body, and its teaching will, as hitherto, be given in the colleges. The same criticism, of course, applies to the proposed university of Westminster. Neither university would therefore necessarily be a teaching university in the literal sense of the word.

The promoters of the Westminster scheme desire to establish a local university for London, and they maintain that the Capital has as great a right to possess such an institution as any other place in the United Kingdom. Until this is made a local question and London, through its representatives, demands a settlement of it, a limited amount of opposition in Parliament will be sufficient to defeat any scheme, no matter what amount of academic support it may secure. The blame for the delay does not, as is constantly stated, rest upon the Government, but upon those who have failed to appreciate the conditions essential to the attainment of the object in view.

For a really comprehensive local scheme I am sanguine

enough to believe that it will not be difficult to arouse the widespread public interest of which the Duke of Devonshire spoke, but no scheme framed merely in the interest of an institution, or of any narrow group of educational bodies, will serve the purpose.

The London teachers of medicine have, I think, cause to be grateful to the promoters of the Westminster scheme for providing them with a conclusive reply to the statement frequently made that the real basis of this movement has been the desire to obtain the power to give "cheap" degrees in medicine to their own students. Had our leaders taken the trouble to ascertain the standard which the teachers themselves have fixed for the diplomas of the Royal Colleges, as tested by the ability of Graduates in Medicine from every university in the United Kingdom to pass the Final Examination of the Conjoint Board, our position in relation to this question in the past would have been very different.

I shall be glad if you will allow me, by giving the facts a place in your columns, to bring them to the notice of the profession at large.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to state that at that examination the candidates are unknown to their examiners, nor are they aware at what medical school the candidate has been educated, nor whether he is a London or a provincial student, or a graduate of a university.

Analysis of the Results of Examination of University Graduates in Medicine. April, 1887, to December, 1896.

University.	Graduates, before or about the Date of Entry for the Final Conjoint Examination.		University Students who Graduated after Entrance for Conjoint Examination.		Percentage of Failures of Graduates from each University.	Average percentage of failures— University graduates	General average of failures— All candidates (new and previously rejected). Total 6,898
	Failed.	Passed.	Failed.	Passed.			
A	1	12	3	3	21.0		
B	12	34	56	74	38.6		
C	22	18	6	6	53.6		
D	3	16	10	27	23.2		
E	5	14	8	5	40.5		
F	85	43	5	3	66.1		
G	2	3	—	—	40.0		
H	14	7	—	—	66.6		
I	2	—	—	—	100.0		
Totals ...	146	147	88	118	—	47.2	36.0
Foreign and colonial graduates	38	39					
Total number of university graduates examined:							
576 { Passed 304							
Failed 272							

It is true that examination can never be more than a partial test of education, but judged by this standard it will be seen from the above table that the percentage of failures of university graduates in medicine is considerably higher than the general average of failures of all candidates.

From the letter of Professor Silvanus Thompson in the *Times* of November 25th, and from other sources of information, it has become apparent that at the present time the test applied to any scheme for settling this question is not, Is this a good, or the best scheme, for providing London with a real university? but, How will this proposal, if carried out, affect the existing University of London? If the question is to be decided from this standpoint, it is clearly possible that the interests of higher education in London may be sacrificed to the supposed interests of that institution; and in my opinion, which must be taken for what it is worth, these interests, and especially those of the medical schools, will be seriously imperilled if the compromise scheme of 1897 is carried into effect in its present form.

Professor Thompson is of opinion that if a successful local university be established in London, the present University will have received its death blow, and others appear to share

his view. I have, on the other hand, expressed a belief that the effect of a great increase in the number of university students in London—a result which would almost certainly follow upon the establishment of a local university—would, in all probability, augment rather than diminish the number of candidates for the degrees of the London University.

Professor Thompson is forcible in statement and confident in his opinions, but he makes no appeal to facts. Facts bearing on this question are, however, at hand, and I will give them, and leave your readers to judge to which of these two conclusions they point.

In 1880 the Victoria University received its first charter, the constituent college of the University being then Owens College, Manchester; subsequently (1884) University College, Liverpool, and the Yorkshire College, Leeds, were incorporated in the University.

Except as regards the situation of its offices, the London University has no more direct connection with the educational institutions of London than it has with the constituent colleges of Victoria University; and if Professor Thompson's view is correct, *those colleges ought long since to have ceased to send candidates to the London University.* No one will, I think, venture to say that the Victoria University is not a success, or that its degrees in all the faculties have not a high reputation. Moreover, the number of graduates of that University shows a steady increase year by year.

The following return, which has been compiled from official sources of information, shows the number of graduates of the London University (it is impossible to ascertain the number of candidates) in Science (B.Sc. only) and Medicine (M.B. only) educated at the constituent colleges of the Victoria University.

In the case of graduates in Science from Owens College I have taken the ten years preceding the incorporation of the University and the last ten years.

The first graduate in Medicine from Owens College does not appear until 1878. I have taken ten years from that date and the last ten years.

London University Graduates from Owens College.

	B.Sc.	M.B.
1870 to 1879	28	29
1888 to 1897	33	52

The first graduate in Science from University College, Liverpool, appears in 1883, and in Medicine in 1887.

London University Graduates from University College, Liverpool.

	B.Sc.	M.B.
1883 to 1889 (7 years)	8	8
1891 to 1897 (7 years)	10	9

From the Yorkshire College, Leeds, the first graduate in Science and in Medicine appears in 1876.

London University Graduates from Yorkshire College, Leeds.

	B.Sc.	M.B.
1876 to 1886 (11 years)	4	5
1887 to 1897	27	19

Taking all the Colleges together the number of graduates proceeding to London during periods of five years for the last twenty years is as follows:

	B.Sc.	M.B.	Totals.
1878 to 1882	13	12	25
1883 to 1887	29	23	52
1888 to 1892	35	45	80
1893 to 1897	36	42	78

It may, I suppose, be taken for granted that London students will be more likely to go to a university situated at their doors than students educated in colleges at a distance.

These figures do not appear to me to show that the Victoria University, at any rate, is dealing "death blows" at the London University.

I enclose the return for your inspection, and if you find that the results I have given are in any way misleading I hope you will correct me.

From an analysis of the returns forwarded by University College, Liverpool, and the Yorkshire College, Leeds, to the Education Department,¹ I find that of their graduates in science and medicine from 1869 to 1896, 65.7 per cent. proceeded to the local University, and 34.3 per cent. to the London University, a distribution of favour which may be

considered as eminently fair. The returns from Owens College are not given in a form which permits of analysis.

So long as the London University maintains the high standard for its *pass* degrees, and the Senate of the University continues to be constituted as at present, its position is impregnable, and I believe that any addition to the number of local universities in this country will only increase the number of candidates for its degrees. If, however, it seeks to alter its Imperial character, and ventures on the dangerous policy of reconstruction, it is difficult to forecast its future. One thing it can never, I believe, become, and that is, a great local University for London.

In the Cowper scheme there is one important omission which must go far to prevent this, as it contains no provision for the development of the corporate life of the undergraduates. A university which includes London, and extends to thirty miles round and embraces the whole British Empire, and which annually matriculates hundreds of school boys who never intend to proceed to a degree, can receive no recognition in the sphere of student life.

This argument, of course, will not appeal to all, but those who know how essential an element in a great university is its student life will not fail to perceive the importance of it. There may be great universities in which this feature is unrepresented, but I do not know of one.

We are constantly told that the history of the London University movement shows that there is such an incapacity for joint action among the educational bodies in London as to render the interference of an external authority absolutely essential. I confess I can see no grounds for this view; the scheme of the Royal Colleges was framed entirely in the interests of the Faculty of Medicine, without reference to those of other Faculties. The Albert or Gresham scheme failed to secure cordial support because it was believed to unduly favour King's and University Colleges, by whom it was originally promoted, and no other scheme except that of the Cowper Commission was ever, so far as I am aware, seriously before the teaching bodies.

Nothing which has yet taken place affords the least proof that a scheme for a local university framed without bias in favour of any particular faculty or institution, in which the internal organisation of each Faculty is determined by its own constituents, and in which the difficult question of the relative importance of faculties is avoided, would fail to secure the support of all the educational bodies interested.

The promoters of the Westminster scheme recognise that many who approve it on its merits feel bound, either by previous engagements or by considerations of policy, to continue their support of the London University Commission Bill, if it is really to appear again in Parliament this year. Should the Bill be reintroduced, the organisation which they have created will not be in any way used to oppose it; if, however, another session should pass without a settlement being arrived at, the promoters will urge the General Committee to adopt a much more decided course of action.

The recent utterances of Mr. Chamberlain at Glasgow and of Sir Rowland Blennerhassett at Cork, are sufficient to show that the movement in favour of establishing local universities, of which the Westminster scheme is an expression, is gaining strength.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

A CONFERENCE was held in the Senate Room of the University on Tuesday last between the Senate and the representatives of about twenty educational bodies named in the report of the Cowper Commission. Lord HERSCHELL, the Chancellor, occupied the chair. He first addressed the meeting, and said that it was understood that early in the coming session of Parliament the Government would introduce a Bill similar to that of last year. Under these circumstances, knowing that there was considerable difference of opinion as to the scheme which should be finally adopted, and seeing that no one could expect to obtain all that he desired, he would suggest that they should all be ready to accept a compromise. The whole question was now in the hands of the Government, and would shortly be under the consideration of Parliament. If the Bill was not passed soon after its introduction, there might be long delay, and probably a worse Bill in the end. He had

¹ Reports from University Colleges participating in the Parliamentary Grant.