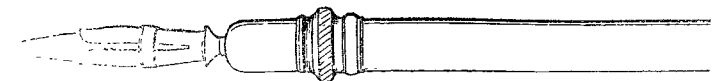


A NEW CAUSTIC HOLDER.

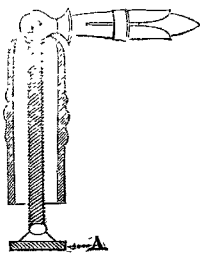
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have lately met with a simple but ingeniously contrived Caustic-holder, invented by Mr. Luxmoore, of Keppel-street, dentist. It was arranged by him for some operations connected with diseased teeth; but it is so convenient in some cases of fistulous sinus, that I think it right to communicate it, through your pages, to the notice of the profession generally. I need not say how much more certain the application of a solid piece of nitrate of silver, or other caustic, is to the more diffuse application of a fluid; and as this Caustic-holder gives a power of applying the caustic in a variety of directions, by the lateral action it affords, I think it may, in a variety of cases, be very advantageously employed. A description of the accompanying woodcuts is hardly necessary. It will be seen that its action is made to depend upon a ball-and-socket joint, which is fixed or detached by a screw.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Savile-row, Dec. 1847. T. J. PETTIGREW, F.R.S., F.R.C.S.



The same instrument bent to a right angle by means of ball-and-socket joint.



A, the screw for fixing the ball. B, the ball-and-socket joint.

FLUID CAMPHOR.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have just read the discussion on "Camphor in Fever," before the Medical Society of London last month, as recorded in THE LANCET, pp. 553, 554. The excellence and superiority of Sir James Murray's "fluid camphor" is there set forth, and Dr. Copland, after lauding it very much as "an important improvement," a "remedy which can display its efficacy at once," "in this state of permanent solution," says, that "there is nothing empirical about it, as the mode of preparation is known to the gentlemen now present." As far as I have ascertained, the profession have not yet been informed how the "fluid camphor" is made; the secret is yet confined to "the gentlemen who were present" at the above meeting.

The best proof of having "nothing empirical about it," is to lay the formula of its preparation before the profession. As a member thereof, therefore, and an *anti-empiric*, in whatever guise, I call upon Sir James, Dr. Copland, or any of the gentlemen by whom it is known, to reveal the secret, so that every practitioner may be enabled to prepare it; otherwise it will be difficult to prove that there is "nothing empirical about it."—I have the honour to be, Sir, your very obedient servant,
December, 1847. A SCOTCH COUNTRY PRACTITIONER.

* * The mode of manufacturing the preparation has been made known, but it is still a patent medicine.—ED. L.

ESTIMATED AND COMPARATIVE VALUE OF A SCOTCH DOCTOR'S SERVICES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Has any of your numerous correspondents called your attention to the high eulogium passed on their surgeon by the Commissioners of Police, at a meeting lately held by them in Edinburgh, after his decease from "fever, caught in the arduous discharge of his duties"? The salary for these "arduous duties" is £180 per annum, subject to an annuity of £80 for life to a former superannuated medical attendant. At the meeting above referred to, the Commissioners, in the plenitude of their liberality, unanimously increased, unsolicited, the salary of their clerk from £250 to £300; and at the same time resolved, that, on the death of the annuitant, their surgeon's

salary should be reduced to £150, so that the "arduous services" of a police surgeon, though he should lose his life in the performance, are valued at just *one half* those of a police clerk, who sits securely at his desk.

How long will members of the medical profession continue to submit to such degrading subjection?—give their strength of body and mind away on such servile and unappreciated conditions?—and immolate their lives on such an inglorious altar?—I am, Sir, your very humble servant,
November, 1847. A PROVINCIAL SURGEON.

MEDICAL FEES AT LIFE ASSURANCE OFFICES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have enclosed a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. Hardey, which I wish to be inserted in THE LANCET, from yours respectfully,
Newport, Monmouthshire, Dec. 1847. W. W. MORGAN.

To Medical Referees.

Legal and Commercial Life Assurance Society.

SIR,—All communications from medical men are strictly confidential, and put, by this society, upon a professional footing. You will please, therefore, to consider yourself *as consulted by the directors, and acting for them*. In addition to answers to the above queries, the directors would feel obliged by a statement of the opinion of the medical adviser *in a separate note*. Immediately on receiving your report, whatever it may be, the directors will convey your fee, 10s. 6d., to any place you may appoint.—I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,
J. C. HARDEY, Actuary and Secretary.

SIR,—In replying to your queries relative to the health of Mr. W——, I do not consider the fee of 10s. 6d. my official one; therefore am obliged to tell each candidate that I expect from him the other 10s. 6d. before I feel myself justified in taking the trouble of examining him so minutely as insurance circulars require. Thus I do not consider myself as consulted by the directors, nor as acting for them *alone*. Considering my services equally engaged by both parties, it would not be honourable on my part to secrete from the proposer any information required by the insurance office. Having lost two respectable patients last year from my confidential reports being *supposed* to be the cause of their disappointment, I cannot feel myself safe in the silence of your disapproval. I hold it more business-like, more manly, more just, to state to the proposer openly, any cause of objection which I may entertain, than to shield myself under the ominous protection of secrecy. Your appointed medical referee being a resident of this town, is an additional guarantee against any evasion or equivocation, or any reservation, if any such be suspected; therefore you hazard nothing. As I mean this communication for insertion in THE LANCET, in consequence of the opposition of some insurance offices to *any* remuneration from them to medical men, and your postscript requiring the comment I have taken the liberty of making herein, I beg also to add, that should any such office decline the principle of remuneration to me for the time and trouble occasioned in forming the opinions required, I invariably recommend the applicants to those offices more favourable to the recognition of professional men's services.—I remain, Sir, yours respectfully, W. W. MORGAN.

DISINFECTION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In a weekly paper I found the following observation:—"Sir William Burnett's process for the preservation of timber from dry rot has been extended to surgical purposes, enabling dissecting operations to be carried on in the hottest weather, without injury to health, or danger of losing life. The fluid—chloride of zinc—constituting his process, has no effect upon the knives."

Can you tell me if this be correct, and also in what way the preparation is to be used—if in solution, in what proportions?—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
November, 1847. A STUDENT.

* * If the above should be correct, Sir W. Burnett would do a great service to the profession, and particularly its younger branches, by publishing it with the authority of his name. We should not like of ourselves to answer the points raised by A Student.—ED. L.