

the "Arguments" associated with them. The graduates, as a body, have never had the question, in *all* its bearings, before them. They have heard but one side. It is confidently anticipated that very many graduates will, after mature reflection, revoke the too hasty vote they have given.—ED. L.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The present differences between the Conservative and Liberal parties in the University of London might, I fancy, be easily reconciled by a simple expedient—viz., that of giving the title, (suggested in their own cases by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge,) Associate in Arts, to those who pass the matriculation examination, which is doubtless as stringent as that proposed by the older universities for the degree of that name, while the regulations for the B.A. degree might remain as at present. This would be particularly beneficial to medical students, as they could have the honour and advantages of a degree in Arts without substituting purely literary for purely medical subjects, and the Bachelors of Arts would not have their existing rights interfered with.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

July, 1857.

ALPHA.

PHOSPHOROUS ACID IN ASTHMA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—During several years past I have given great relief in many cases of asthma by the following preparation:—Glycerine, (sp. gr. 1250,) half an ounce; peppermint water, six ounces; spring-water, four ounces: one large spoonful to be taken three times a day. But I have recently been so very successful with phosphorous acid that I am anxious to make it known for the benefit of mankind. I will give you one case in illustration.

On the 29th of April last, Robert Kendrick, aged forty-three, living at 60, Chambers-street, Goodman's-fields, White-chapel, consulted me. The symptoms were—great difficulty in breathing, harassing cough, much yellow and greenish tenacious phlegm, costive habit, very cold extremities, greatly troubled with wind, early morning perspirations, bad appetite, mouth parched, offensive taste and odour, and very thirsty on awaking in the morning; urine scanty, and often much pain in the loins, headache, giddiness, &c. &c., with great emaciation and prostration of the physical and mental power. I at once prescribed phosphorous acid as follows:—Phosphorous acid, one ounce, to a pint of spring-water; two ounces to be taken three times a day. In the course of three days he found his breathing much better, and all the other morbid symptoms have gradually disappeared, until he is now able to return to his employment as a mechanic. I saw him a few days ago; he has become much more active and cheerful, holds himself more erect, and the countenance and complexion, which were anxious and cadaverous, have greatly improved.

There are several processes by which the phosphorus acid is formed, that of Sir Humphrey Davy being perhaps the most precise, but requiring much care in its manipulation. The plan which I have adopted is a modification of that of Davy. If any of your readers would like to see the process, I shall feel great pleasure in showing and explaining it, if a note be sent to appoint a suitable time; or I will give any explanation by letter.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Fountain-place, City-road, July, 1857.

S. ROWBOTHAM, M.D.

* * Dr. Rowbotham should forward to us his mode of preparing the acid.

COLLODION AS AN ESCHAROTIC.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of the 20th of June, page 634, I observe mention of "Collodion as an Escharotic" having been used with advantage by a German physician, who for this purpose states that he dissolves one drachm of corrosive sublimate in an ounce of collodion. I have my doubts as to the quantitative accuracy of this statement, but can vouch for its qualitative efficacy, having long used it in hospital practice both in India and here.

Many years ago I was led to the employment of "cotton dressings" for ulcers, &c., by observing the admirable results of this mode of treatment amongst the Bengalees, who soak the common cotton-wool of their country in decoctions of vari-

ous herbs, dry it in the sun, and then spread it out in successive thin layers over the surface of foul sores, bandage up the limb, and never remove any of the layers except the upper ones, when they become saturated with the pus or ichor discharged from the ulcer. The first layer is left, and aids in forming a scab on the surface; but the upper layers are replaced by fresh ones every day or so, as occasion requires.

The use of ointments and waxy plasters has long been discarded in India, and even water dressings, though very useful in cases of surgical operations, &c., are not so serviceable in cases of open ulcers as the dry, simple, or medicated cottons, kept on by a light, thin muslin bandage.

In imitation of the native practice, I have for many years been in the habit of using cotton-wool, soaked in strong solutions of mineral salts, such as the nitrate of silver, corrosive sublimate, sulphate of copper, sulphate of zinc, sulphate of iron, and iodide of potass, &c., allowing it first to dry in the sun. I have thus prescribed, as need was, either black, blue, green, or yellow cotton. But as the crystals which frequently form on the cotton fibre while drying proved sometimes troublesome, I was led to try whether these agents might not act better if gun-cotton was used instead of cotton-wool; and a step farther led me to dissolve the gun-cotton, thus saturated with these salts, in common ether, making in this way a *medicated collodion*, more manageable than any form of paste or ointment, or plaster or dressing. The result was both surprising and gratifying; and I have no hesitation in stating, that solutions in collodion of arsenic, corrosive sublimate, iodide of zinc, chloride of zinc, acetate of lead, chromic acid, cantharidine, croton oil, &c., may readily be made, and will be found extremely handy, as well as serviceable, in surgical practice.

In the treatment of buboes, warts, and glandular and other tumours, I can vouch for their powerful efficacy; nor need I appeal by name, in corroboration of my statement, to the several medical men who, during the last two years, have witnessed their application in this hospital; as every practitioner can try them for himself in a hundred cases.

In conclusion, I may, however, allude to Dr. Fell's plan of incising the first-formed slough, and cramming pieces of dressing filled with his paste down to the vital structure, as a procedure quite unnecessary; since a camel-hair brush or feather, dipped in any of these collodions, can be used to apply the remedy, either to the deepest fissure, or, as I have often done, to the whole length of a tortuous and lazily-healing fistula.

Some of your readers will perhaps doubt the possibility of solution of some of these salts at all in ether. To them I can only say, try it. That these preparations are veritable "solutions," not "suspensions," of metallic salts in collodion (though I do not know in what particular condition), is evident from the perfect brilliant transparency of all of them when allowed to stand still for a few hours; and the common well-known chemical tests will readily demonstrate the *presence*, though not the *quantity* or the *condition*, of each of the metals in these solutions. A series of them was placed by me, some months ago, in the hands of my friend Mr. Warrington, at the Apothecaries' Hall, London (whose report, however, I have not yet received), which were prepared here by my apothecary, Mr. Webber, a better though not less fallible chemist than,

Sir, your obedient servant,

East India Co.'s Depôt Hospital,
Warley, Essex, June, 1857.

D. STEWART, M.D.,
Staff Surgeon, 1st Class.

THE £10 FELLOWS OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I read, in your journal of the 4th inst., the letter of "A £10 Fellow" with a stare of wondering astonishment; but this feeling, by the time I had completed its first perusal, subsided into one of contempt. The fittest signature that could have been appended to it, so far as it might have served still further to illustrate the character and temper of the writer, I could not but think, at the time, would have been that of "Bombastes Furioso." After momentary reflection, however, I became incredulous of his sincerity; and at length I scouted the idea that any man—unless he were acting an assumed character—who possessed the least discernment and discretion, could so wilfully commit to derision, by the very silliness of his pretensions, the cause and its party which he was supposed to be advocating. This view led me to the conclusion that the so-called "Fellow" was really a fellow by right of "examination," and not, as he would have it imputed, by virtue of his