

## Correspondence.

"A<sup>1</sup> di alteram partem."

## THE BOUGIE A BOULE AND THE BOUGIE OLIVAIRE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Teevan is indeed in extremities for a defence, if it consists in the assertion that I do not know a bougie from a catheter! The instrument described by Mr. Acton in 1856 has an eye in it, it is true; but the whole gist of the matter, as Mr. Teevan well knows, lies in its *having the bulbous end, and in its extreme flexibility*; whether a hole is cut in it, to let the urine pass through, or not (Mr. Teevan perhaps is not aware that these French flexible bougies and catheters are alike *equally hollow*), makes no difference whatever as to the principle of construction, which we are discussing.

But the most complete answer to Mr. Teevan comes from his own mouth. If Mr. Quain, as he says, employed the bougie in question at University College Hospital so many years ago, why did Mr. Teevan suppress that important fact in his "history" until my letter elicited it, and state, as he had the temerity to do, that he (Mr. Teevan) introduced these instruments "into hospital practice about five years ago"?

That is the real question between us, and the occasion of my writing. Had he not claimed this priority, now confessed to be so utterly untenable, I should never have troubled you with a remark.

As to the rest, such as reference to the year 1867, to my "studiously suppressing," &c., all this is special pleading—a vain attempt to get rid of the fact, which I am compelled to restate, that Sir Henry Thompson described, gave drawings of, and strongly recommended the use of the bulbous-ended sound for the diagnosis of stricture, in his Jacksonian prize essay for the year 1852, at which early period the inability to distinguish between a bougie and a catheter, which Mr. Teevan suggests for me, may very probably, in strict truth, and not at all in jest, have been applicable to himself.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Welbeck-street, May 9th, 1870. JOHN FOSTER.

## THE HYDRATE OF CHLORAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have read with much interest the terse and valuable paper on this subject, by Mr. Weeden Cooke, published in your number of yesterday; and having myself advocated, in a letter dated March 11th, and published by you on the 16th ult., the efficiency of chloral as a palliative in malignant disease, I have perused it with even more than the ordinary attention which the literary ability of the author would of itself ensure.

I rejoice to find that Mr. Weeden Cooke remarks the same advantages to be possessed by it as I had myself drawn attention to—viz., that, while it does not produce headache, derange the digestive organs, nor cause loss of appetite or nervous prostration, it leaves the refreshing effects of a sound and placid sleep.

Mr. Cooke prefers ten-grain doses three times daily, or twenty grains if given as a night draught. Strange to say, my experience of it, and I have used it extensively, dictates large doses (say, thirty or forty grains) given alone as night draughts, large enough to cause sound sleep prolonged for several hours. Such doses have with me never produced delirium; but, on the contrary, *persons whose sleep has been disturbed by dreams after a small dose, have slept soundly subsequent to the receipt of a larger one.* Without doubting the accuracy of Mr. Cooke's observation, I query if the "severe bronchitis" which accompanied his case of mammary cancer would not have given rise to the "complaint of headache and some delirium at night," independent of the thirty-grain dose of chloral administered.

A prolonged night's repose is always fraught with considerable advantage, particularly to those suffering from a painful disease, hence I invariably prescribe sufficient to procure it.

Your obedient servant,  
South Molton, May 1st, 1870. FRANCIS E. CLARKE, M.B.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Perhaps you will spare a corner in your journal to allow me to tell your readers the benefit of hydrate of chloral in scarlet fever. For the last few months there has been a good deal of this fever in the neighbourhood, and although not very fatal, it has been very troublesome on account of the great itchiness that has attended the eruption. To alleviate this I had tried many things, but generally without success. At the suggestion of Dr. Aitken, the gentleman whom I assist, I prescribed the hydrate of chloral. Since then I have used it in a great many cases; and in every one it has not only allayed the itching, but I am satisfied prevented the disease from assuming an aggravated form. As this is a new remedy, perhaps others will give it a trial, and report the result of their experience.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Hyson-green, Nottingham, April 28th, 1870. ALFRED BERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A correspondent having expressed a wish that cases where chloral had been used should be reported, I beg to mention that I have used it in a case of cancer involving the whole of the left mamma and the axillary and cervical glands on the same side. The patient has had much more rest since the use of it was commenced, and appears very grateful for the relief. I gave it in fifteen-grain doses at first, but it soon ceased to act. I have increased the dose to thirty grains, and it has a very good effect. The vehicle has been water and syrup of orange-peel.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,  
Leigh Sinton, Malvern, May 3rd, 1870. GEO. F. KNIPE.

## THE BILL AND THE MEDICAL COUNCIL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Lord De Grey has promised to amend those clauses of his Bill giving power to the Privy Council over the General Medical Council; but everybody is dissatisfied with the fact that he declines to make any change in the composition of the Medical Council. From the tenour of his Lordship's remarks in the House of Lords, his great objection seems to be to an enlargement of the Council, and this is an objection of great weight and reasonableness. I beg, Sir, to make a suggestion that will obviate this objection. If acted on, I believe the Bill would be much more acceptable to the profession.

My suggestion is to reduce the numbers of the present Council by combining the various licensing bodies in the choice of representatives. With one or two exceptions each licensing body now has a separate representative; my proposal is that two or more bodies should combine so as to be represented on the Council by one man. This would give us a Council with about half the present number of representatives of corporations, and leave room for the introduction of four representatives of general practitioners, two for England, and one for Ireland and Scotland respectively. In such a Council the representatives of the Crown, of the educating and licensing bodies, and of the profession, which is so deeply interested in all that is done by the Medical Council, and which supports the Council financially, would have a place.

Let me urge one or two considerations in support of this plan which, I hope, may commend themselves to Lord De Grey, and failing this to some statesman in the House of Commons.

First. The principle of this suggestion is consistent with a principle in the Act of 1858. It is one of the mysteries of that Act that, whereas it assigns one whole representative to the little University of Durham, which has very few medical graduates, and a very slight medical history, it