proportion of cases of small-pox occurring under circumstances which render hospital isolation unnecessary is smaller than in other parts of London.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND WOMEN MEMBERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have to ask that you will kindly insert in THE LANCET the following letter addressed by me to the Secretary of the British Medical Association, together with the resolution forwarded to me in reply from the Committee of Council of the Association :—

"67, Grosvenor-street, Dec. 21st, 1877.

"MY DEAR SIR,—After some consideration, I have resolved to ask you to bring the following question before the Council of the British Medical Association, and to favour me with a reply. The question which I desire to put is this: Are women to be permitted in the future to attend the meetings of the medical, surgical, and other sections of the annual and other meetings of the British Medical Association, and to take part in the discussions at such meetings?"

"I had believed that this question was answered in the negative by a large majority of the Association a few years ago.

"At the last meeting, held at Manchester, a lady was present, and spoke in a discussion in the section of Medicine.

"As I do not intend to be a member of any society where medical topics are debated in public between men and women, I shall be glad to learn the decision of the Council on this matter, reserving to myself the right to publish this inquiry, and the reply which I may receive.

(Signed) "WILSON FOX.

"To Francis Fowke, Esq."

In reply, I have received from Mr. Fowke the following resolution: "That Dr. Wilson Fox be informed that the Committee of Council have no power to prevent ladies who are members of the Association from attending the meetings of the Association."

I have to add that on the receipt of this resolution I wrote to the secretary of the Association, stating that the decision of the Committee of Council has left me no option but to request that my name be removed from the list of the members of the Association. The matter is one for individual opinion, but I think it right to call the attention of the profession to a question which appears to me of considerable importance—viz., how far public discussions on medical topics at which men and women are present, and on which no restrictions are placed, are consistent with the rules of propriety and delicacy which have hitherto been generally held to obtain in the relations between the sexes.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

Jan. 26th, 1878.

WILSON FOX.

ARTIFICIAL LARYNX.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issues of 19th and 26th inst. different accounts appear of the origin of the voice-tubes adopted by Dr. Foulis in his recent case of excision of the larynx.

At page 87 (19th inst.) I find :—"The ingenious instrument was the invention of Dr. Irvine, and was constructed independently of Gussenbauer's instrument, upon which this was a decided improvement."

At pages 118—119 (26th inst.) I find : "Dr. Irvine having suggested and embodied in a rough model the idea of reversing the relative position of the tubes this voice tube is based on the plan of that of Gussenbauer."

These two accounts being obviously inconsistent with each other, and even contradictory, I trust you will allow me space in your journal to state that the first, that of the 19th inst., is the correct account, whilst the later one is erroneous and misleading.

When I devised my tubes I was quite unacquainted with

the constructive details of any instrument previously made for the same purpose, knowing only that the operation had been performed on the Continent, and a voice instrument used, but nothing more.

I could not therefore suggest the reversing of parts, the construction or relative position of which was unknown to me; nor could I possibly "base" the construction of my tube on Gussenbauer's instrument. Whilst my tubes are admittedly superior to Gussenbauer's instruments in important features, it is not surprising that there should be some similarity between them, seeing that they were designed for the same purpose, and had to be adapted to a position not allowing much variation of form.

Yours truly,

Glasgow, 29th January, 1878.

A. K. IRVINE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Irvine has called upon me, and has drawn my attention to an apparent discrepancy between my paper which appeared in your last issue and the report of the Medical Society of London in THE LANCET of the previous week. In the latter I am made to say that Dr. Irvine contrived the tube independently of Gussenbauer. What I did say was, that "I understood that Dr. Irvine wished it to be said that he had contrived the tube independently." Dr. Irvine's claim must rest on his word alone and not on mine, for I was not aware that he had any such claim until the patient had worn the improved tube for three months; and, in fact, it was only at the last moment before the meeting that a letter was shown to me, in which this claim was advanced. Willing to allow to him every particle of credit which might be due, I gave expression to his wish at the meeting. In the account written by me for THE LANCET, however, I could not do otherwise than describe the modification of the tube as it occurred under my own eyes.

It is unfortunate that Dr. Irvine should have said nothing to us about his claim to originality; and still more so that he only showed us the improved model some days after Gussenbauer's tube had been shown to him. But I am not responsible for that.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Glasgow, Jan. 31st, 1878.

D. FOULIS.

"THE USE AND ABUSE OF PESSARIES."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Dr. Bantock attaches too much importance to a casual statement of mine about intrauterine pessaries, and to a case which he describes as having been at one time under my care.

I have read with interest his paper on the use of pessaries (THE LANCET, Jan. 26th, p. 120) so far as it is as yet published, and I find nothing very different from my own views, and nothing about intrauterine pessaries. It appears to me worth while to make two statements on the very difficult subject under discussion.

I have given up the use of intrauterine pessaries.

The support, by a Hodge or similar vaginal pessary, of a large tender displaced uterus I esteem a plan of treatment well worthy of trial, and act accordingly.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. MATTHEWS DUNCAN.

Brook-street, Grosvenor-square, Jan. 26th, 1878.

POISONING PER VAGINAM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case, bearing on the subject of Mr. Gore's letter, and occurring in my practice three or four years ago, has left a vivid impression on my mind.

Mrs. A—, aged fifty-six, no children, had been suffering for some time with tendency to prolapsus of bladder (since then she has had complete prolapsus), which occasioned much pain and irritability of bladder. To relieve this I prescribed six pessaries made with cocoa butter, and each containing two grains of extract of belladonna, one to be used night and morning. The same evening, soon after I had gone to bed, the husband came in a state of great excitement, and said he thought his wife was poisoned "by those things you have given her to use." I asked the symptoms, and he very