

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

AN INTERESTING NOTE UPON HOLDEN'S OSTEOLOGY.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have only very recently read your obituary notice of my old teacher and friend, Luther Holden. It has much interested me. Referring to his great and admirable work, "Human Osteology," you say, "When it appeared (viz., in 1855) the reviews generally contained the remark, 'Why did no one think of this before?'" A most natural question, seeing how simple a matter it was. In connexion with it, however, there are a few facts relating to what preceded which may have an interest as illustrating the manner in which the practical applications of inventions often come about.

From 1846 to 1850 I was a student at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. During the winter session of 1848-49, with the view of acquiring for myself a more accurate knowledge of the attachments of muscle, I brought to the dissecting room the bones of the portion I was dissecting and carefully drew with a pencil the outline of the space occupied by the attachment of each muscle. When I had satisfied myself as far as possible of the correctness of these outlines I took the bone home and painted with Indian ink the whole surface included in the outline of each muscular attachment. When a bone was thus completed it was varnished. At this time Mr. Holmes Coote and Mr. Luther Holden were our demonstrators in the dissecting room. I passed the examination of the College of Surgeons shortly before Christmas, 1849, and that of the Apothecaries' Company in May, 1850. Before I left the hospital Mr. Coote asked me to lend him my marked bones. I did so with alacrity, feeling gratified that he took an interest in them, and he kept them many months. Shortly after he had returned them his little book on the bones was published with illustrations, on which were shown for the first time in fine outlines the attachments of the muscles. Not long afterwards Mr. Coote died. One day I had some of the bones in the museum when Sir William Lawrence was there. On showing them to him he looked at them attentively, then shrugged his shoulders and smacked his lips, as his manner was, and expressed much approval.

On quitting the hospital my father offered me a tempting opening in the old concern in Plough-court, Lombard-street, and being engaged and anxious to marry I gladly accepted it, and, abandoning all idea of practice, soon became closely occupied with other interests, and it was, I believe, some years after the publication of Mr. Holden's beautiful book that I first saw it. I had intended to let the above particulars die with me but the reviewer's remark quoted by you, "Why did no one think of this before?" seems to invite the foregoing statement.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Little Berkhamsted, May 9th, 1905. CORNELIUS HANBURY.

PS.—I am sending the bones I marked to the museum of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where, no doubt, they will be open to the examination of anyone interested and may afford a useful suggestion to some careful students.

THE TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS OF THE LUNGS BY MEANS OF TUBERCULIN.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In my article on the Treatment of Tuberculosis of the Lungs by Means of Tuberculin and other Bacterial Derivatives, published in THE LANCET of April 8th last (p. 923), I made the following statement in criticism of the results obtained by Dr. Lawrason Brown in the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis by means of tuberculin: "And criticising the figures given by Brown it would really appear that 204 out of 232 cases were apparently cured without tuberculin, which is 72·3 per cent.—*greater* than the results with tuberculin."

Dr. Lawrason Brown has pointed out that this is a mistake

on my part and that instead of 204 the figures should be 173. This would give a percentage cure without tuberculin of 61·3 per cent. and Dr. Lawrason Brown has pointed out in his admirable article in the *Zeitschrift für Tuberkulose und Heilstättenwesen*, 1904, Band vi., Heft 4, S. 235, that he has been able to secure an apparent cure in similar cases, using tuberculin, of 72 per cent., which is 10·7 per cent. better than when tuberculin was not used. I am the more wishful to correct this mistake, for Dr. Lawrason Brown has taken the greatest care to avoid making extravagant claims in favour of tuberculin. Dr. Lawrason Brown's results support the favourable reports published by others on the value of tuberculin in suitable cases and do not militate against them, as my remarks may have led your readers to think.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

May 8th, 1905.

H. BATTY SHAW.

IF TUBERCULOSIS SHOULD BE CERTIFIED, WHY NOT SYPHILIS?

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In the correspondence on this subject in THE LANCET one point appears to have escaped notice—viz., that before notifying a disease it is necessary to diagnose it. In the evidence before the recent committee on physical deterioration Sir Alfred Cooper stated: "It is advisable that there should be special departments at general hospitals for the treatment of this class of disease and all such cases should be relegated to that department. It should be under the charge of someone specially skilled in that branch of professional knowledge and a course of instruction in that subject should be compulsory for every student. These special departments have been in existence for years past in the majority of European countries and in America." In fact, in this country there is no systematic teaching of syphilis and venereal diseases and the majority of medical men go into practice knowing little or nothing of two of the most widespread and disastrous diseases which afflict mankind. Until this state of affairs is altered it is idle to speak of notification.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

May 4th, 1905.

C. F. MARSHALL, F.R.C.S. Eng.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLAGUE-INFECTED ANIMALS AND THE DISEASE IN MAN.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—In dealing with Professor W. J. R. Simpson's "Treatise on Plague" in THE LANCET of May 6th, p. 1205, your reviewer attributes certain experiments carried out in Natal on the "relationship between plague-infected animals and the disease in man" to Mr. Ernest Hill. May I be permitted to point out that this is not quite correct? A full account of the experiments in question is embodied, it is true, in Mr. Hill's "Report on the Plague in Natal," 1902-03, but practically the whole of the work was carried out by Mr. H. Watkins Pitchford, the Natal Government bacteriologist, and Dr. Haydon.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

H. S. WILLSON, M.B. Cantab.

King's College, Strand, W.C., May 9th, 1905.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND.—

At a meeting of the President, Vice-President, and Council, held recently, the following examiners were elected: Anatomy: Patrick Joseph Fagan and Alexander Fraser. Surgery: F. Conway Dwyer, Andrew Fullerton, Thomas E. Gordon, and R. Lane-Joynt. Physiology and histology: Charles Coppinger and E. L'Estrange Ledwich. Pathology and bacteriology: Robert Allen and Arthur Hamilton White. Midwifery and gynaecology: Frederick W. Kidd. Biology: John J. Burgess. Ophthalmology: Arthur H. Benson and Patrick W. Maxwell. Sanitary law and vital statistics: H. Benson Goulding. Engineering and architecture: J. Charles Wilmot. Chemistry and physics: Edwin Lapper and Robert J. Montgomery. Dental surgery and pathology: George M. P. Murray and William G. Story. Mechanical dentistry: William Booth Pearsall and Daniel L. Rogers. Languages: L. J. Woodroffe. Mathematics, physics, dictation, and English essay: J. W. Tristram.