olling in his chair, at perfect ease before his libelled brethren, supported by another similar ornament of our profession, who occupied quite as conspicuous a place before the audience, Mr. Guthrie,—whose evidence before the Parliamentary Committee contains the most impudent vilifications of the profession that ever fell from the lips of man. It was a cunning piece of policy of the council to protect themselves on such an occasion from the expression of all opinions on the part of the insulted members, by procuring the attendance of many distinguished individuals, whom courtesy, if not feelings of respect, would induce them to applaud. It was remarkable, too, that the public characters invited were, almost without exception, of the Tory party,—Wellington, Peel, Stanley, Inglis, and Bishop Blomfield. In this, again, the council acted wisely, for in the Tory party rests their only hope of life as a corporate body, though surely the day of collegiate misrule is past. The charter of the London University is a fatal prognostic for the council of the College of Surgeons.

Sir Benjamin Brodie was the orator, and he had got the oration so well by heart, that he had little occasion to consult his manuscript. With this compliment to his *memory*, I fear my praise must end. The Great Captain, although the cynosure of every eye, could not keep his own eyes open to the close of the discourse. Among the few *notabilia* of the oration, was a comparison between *Cuvier* and *John Hunter*, in which, of course, the palm was awarded to Hunter. One, he said, had written a commendable book on comparative anatomy, but the other had formed a museum. For this singular ignorance of *Cuvier's* noble museum in Paris, the mortal remains of Sir Benjamin, or, at least, his osseous remains, ought to be placed amongst the curious collection of skeletons in the French Museum. The comparison, however, was altogether perfectly absurd. Hunter might as well be compared with Paganini, so different were the avocations and merits of the two men. One would have supposed that Hunter's merits, as a comparative anatomist, and as the creator of the science of surgery, were enough to rest his celebrity upon; but so thought not Sir Benjamin. It appears that Sir Benjamin, a year or two since, found a bit of stick partly denuded of its bark, in one of the museum-boxes, or drawers. Any common-minded man would have supposed that the bark was removed to fit the stick better as a prop, perhaps; but Sir Benjamin has detected in it that Hunter had anticipated the discovery respecting the descent of the sap of trees, for which Mr. Knight has obtained so much credit. After passing the annual eulogium on the Hunters, Sir Benjamin adverted to some luminaries of science who have lately descended beneath the horizon, Sir William

Blizard and Sir Everard Home, both of whom were very appropriate ornaments of the College Council. Of the first, Sir Benjamin himself hardly knew what to say. The old Knight's prejudices and antiquated notions, however, served as a peg for a dull joke. Of Home, after the burning of Hunter's manuscripts, to mention his name with honour in any public assembly is an offence to morals and common decency. But Sir Benjamin Brodie was Home's confidential assistant. Home built his fame upon Hunter. Brodie's fame must have been founded on his connexion with Home. Is not this stimulus to support the name of Home, sufficient to outweigh the depressing effects of Home's proceedings? Sir B. Brodie owes to this connexion his own fame. That source is now exhausted. It is really not a little curious that Brodie, who became known by some successful physiological experiments, at the dawn of experimental physiology, should have since, during a long life of the best opportunities, done nothing worthy of mention. His last work, I believe, is a compilation on strictures, which contains nothing that is strictly new to the observant practitioner. He is a notable instance of the length that prudence and industry may carry a man of common-place abilities in the road to riches and honour; and the *exhibition* of such a person on Valentine's Day may be more influential on the young members, in stimulating them to exertion, than the often-told tale of Hunter's commanding genius, and triumphant discoveries in science.

X. X.

THE LECTURES ON MIDWIFERY, AT KING'S COLLEGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Certain mis-statements having been made in THE LANCET for Feb. 18th, by a supposed and anonymous *student* of King's College, may I request the favour of your inserting the following remarks:—It is asserted that the Professor of Midwifery has ceased to lecture in consequence of the smallness of his class, and it is insinuated that the decrease is owing to a decrease in the entries. This is not true. The number of entries is the same, and is determined at the beginning of the winter session; and therefore, so far as this is concerned, the Professor of Midwifery has the same inducements to continue to lecture now as he had at the commencement of Oct.; but he has postponed his second course of lectures till May next, with the full concurrence of his class, because, by the new regulations of the Society of Apothecaries, the great majority need not attend at present, or are not permitted to receive certificates for attendance,

if they did so attend; by these regulations, only one course of sixty lectures, including examinations, can be given in six months, a law which, not being retrospective, has divided the class of every midwifery lecturer into three sections. Of those under the old regulations, one portion require but one course to finish their education; a second set (having postponed their attendance on midwifery lectures to the last) require two courses this winter; and the third portion, being new pupils, are permitted to attend only one course in the same period.

One course of sixty lectures, therefore, having been given by the Professor of Midwifery, such of the old students who required but one course, and such of the new who were, for the present, permitted to attend only one, were absolved from further attendance, and those who required two courses were only left,—these were only four in number, and are gentlemen incapable of uttering the charge which the "Student" has made in their name, in the following words:—"He tells us to read Dr. Merri-man's work, and to go to his house every Sunday to be examined, and promises, if he find a man to have read, to give him a certificate of attendance on lectures." The statement is framed so as to lead to the inference that any pupil may have a certificate of attendance on the midwifery lectures of the King's College, although he have never attended a single lecture, provided only he submits to a few examinations on Dr. Merri-man's work. Such a statement is totally untrue. 1st, It was never proposed to substitute readings for lectures, but a familiar course of instruction by question and answer for the more formal one of lectures, and this at the request of the students themselves. 2dly, The plan was never intended to be general, but to be strictly confined to the four gentlemen alluded to, who, having attended sixty out of the ninety lectures required to entitle them to a certificate, did not, by adopting the plan proposed, infringe either the spirit or the letter of the apothecaries' regulations, for these recognise examinations to be as valid as lectures, when conjoined with them. Lastly, The plan was simply discussed, and never acted on, the Professor of Midwifery having been informed that the most calumnious constructions would be, and were, put on it by persons inimical to King's College.

I have only to add, that the Professor of Midwifery offered the four students alluded to, either to enter them to any midwifery lectures which might be given in London at the time, or to return the fees which had been paid. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

RICHARD PARTRIDGE,
Registrar in the Medical School
of King's College.

King's College, Feb. 22, 1837.

LONDON MEDICAL SOCIETY.

Monday, Feb. 27th.—Dr. Whiting, President.

RUPTURE OF THE UTERUS.—THE SECALE COR-
NUTUM IN LABOUR, HÆMORRHAGE, AND LEU-
CORRHEA.

Mr. HOOPER related a case of rupture of the uterus. The patient, a strong, healthy woman, 32 years of age, had borne nine children, and was taken in labour on the 16th of August last, at 11 P.M. After being five hours in active labour, with regular and strong pains, the uterine efforts suddenly ceased, and the patient remained composed for twelve hours. The midwife in attendance then gave a drachm of the secale cornutum in powder, which, not producing any effect, in the course of an hour she repeated, and left the patient. In a few hours the labour-pains returned, and the midwife was sent for, when the patient, while using the chamber utensil, suddenly exclaimed that something had burst within her, and she felt as if "all the blood was coming from her heart." At this stage of the proceeding he (Mr. Hooper) was called in, and was informed by the midwife that it was a "false conception," and that she had been endeavouring to remove it. The patient was labouring under great difficulty of breathing, was in a profuse perspiration, and was making violent efforts to expel the child. The placenta had come forth, and lay on the bed, with a portion of intestine, which protruded from the vagina. The intestine was immediately returned into the abdomen. A large rent existed in the vagina, and the uterus was ruptured, from the mouth to the fundus. On introducing the hand into the abdomen, the child was found impacted, high up, with the head towards the abdominal parietes, and the feet towards the vertebræ. A consultation was held, and it was thought advisable to remove the child by the blunt hook. The foetus was situated so high up, that the legs could not be reached, so that version could not be performed. The child was removed by the blunt hook. Little hæmorrhage ensued. Delirium soon after came on and the woman died in the course of a few hours, in violent convulsions. The uterus was found to be healthy, and the muscular fibres were very firm; the laceration was at its posterior side; the promontory of the sacrum very prominent; the intestines were healthy; the portion which had been expelled was a part of the sigmoid flexure of the colon.

Mr. CLIFTON inquired whether Mr. Hooper had formed an idea of the cause of the rupture? In all the cases which he (Mr. Clifton) had witnessed, there had been some previous lesion of the uterus. He had generally found version the best proceeding. The cause of the death within so short a period