five or six times, with a hole in the centre about the size of a shilling, was placed on the course of the vein in five places, each being filled with a paste composed of quick lime, caustic potash, and a sufficient quantity of rectified spirits of wine. They were kept on for about twenty minutes. After their removal linseed-meal poultices were applied, twice or three times a-day. The last slough came out on the sixteenth day. Simple dressings speedily healed the sores. He can walk at present a distance of eight miles, besides being on his legs the greater part of the day. The muscles, which at first were loose and flabby, are now firm and well developed. I have seen several methods adopted for the cure of varicose veins, but I consider the above preferable to any other.

TENOTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I venture to request the favour of a small space in your excellent Journal for a few remarks on some observations of a correspondent, p. 323 of the last number of *THE LANCET*. The writer, with the very proper object of cautioning students against *unnecessary* interference with strumous articulations, discusses the question of the applicability of tenotomy to a case of dislocation of the ankle-joint during the severest form of disorganising disease of tarsal bones and ligament. "Sinuses existed opposite to each of the malleoli.....The ankle-joint admitted of an unusual extent of motion *laterally*."....."The astragalus was denuded of cartilage, and the cancelli of the bones contained a substance in appearance like red current-jelly." I am at a loss to comprehend on what ground your correspondent should have raised the question of the applicability of division of the tendo-Achillis during the existence of so much actual disease. Surely it never entered into the mind of any body conversant with the nature of destructive disease of an articulation seriously to contemplate or practise the section of tendons with the view of effecting replacement of the luxated bones under such circumstances. I have referred for information on the subject to the lectures on deformities by Dr. Little now publishing in your Journal, and in lecture 3, p. 80, referring to deformities from *previous* disease of joints;—the lecturer states as a caution, "avoid tenotomy until the original disease and any tendency to relapse have completely subsided;" and again, p. 82, "*after* strumous disease of an articulation it is prudent to wait a longer period, or until a favourable change in the diathesis of the individual has taken place. Sometimes, in such cases, we may be compelled to wait even several years before attempting to restore the usefulness of the member." It is evident that the lec-

turer mistrusted the zeal of some of his hearers; it is certain he will not regret his caution being republished, by Sir, your very obedient servant,

AN ORTHOPÆDIC STUDENT.

London, Dec. 11, 1843.

P.S. Supposing tenotomy to have been applicable in the case described, I should imagine that the part of the tendo-Achillis having been adherent to the skin would not, as your correspondent supposes, have been any impediment to complete subcutaneous section of it.

WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—For a period of some years I have read with great pleasure and advantage to myself the able articles that have been disseminated through the pages of your far-famed Journal; and if my feeble offering will not tend to diminish the reputation you have gained, your inserting my communication will greatly oblige yours very respectfully,

JOHN HOOPER,
House-Pupil at the West-
minster Hospital.

December 8, 1843.

POISONING BY OPIUM.

A young woman, apparently of the age of twenty-five, was brought into the hospital on Thursday, at half-past four in the afternoon, suffering from the effects of opium. She was perfectly comatose, the features were totally devoid of expression; the lips were tinged with a purplish hue, and the pupils were contracted to the size of a pin's-head, whilst the eyes were everted and fixed; the heart's action was languid in the extreme, whilst the radial artery at the wrist gave an irregular and weak pulsation at each throb of the heart. Emetics were immediately administered by Mr. Longmore, the clinical assistant, consisting of the sulphate of zinc in scruple doses, the second time with some tartar emetic in addition, but without any effect whatever being superinduced. In consequence of the contents of the stomach not being evacuated, the stomach-pump was had recourse to, but considerable delay was experienced by the disarrangement of the apparatus, which had never been used since it had been repaired, and from some defect it would not answer until half-past five, when Mr. Brock, the house-surgeon, succeeded, with his accustomed skill, in producing the desired effect. So long a time had elapsed that the contents of the stomach were entirely free from the odour of opium, clearly indicating that every particle had been absorbed. About sixpenny-worth, in the fluid form, had been swallowed,

which would be an ounce ; therefore *twenty-four grains* must have been taken. She was kept continually walking ; coffee was administered, &c. ; and, strange to say, she recovered. The case is interesting as it proves that the remedial measures in this instance could not have brought about so favourable and unlooked-for a termination, and it shows what nature can do in restoring herself to her accustomed powers, without the intervention of medical science or chirographical art.

HYDRIODATE OF POTASH.

To the Editor,—Sir: I have just read your very just remarks in THE LANCET on those gentlemen who boast of giving large doses of hydriodate of potash, such as half an ounce, which, in my opinion, would prove fatal if the article were pure. Gr. x, *ter die*, is the largest dose that I have ever given, beginning with gr. iij, *ter die*, with the greatest success (internally) in cases of diseased joints. Externally I have used it with curative effects in the form of ointment, thus:—R *Hydriod. pot.*, 3j ; *aq. distill.*, 5j. Solve, and mix with 3j of lard ; a piece of the size of a large nut, to be used two or three times a day. I have at this moment a case of bronchocele which is progressing favourably under the use of the remedy ; the patient has come from Gravesend to be under my care. She was all but suffocated, and left to die, after consultations repeated during eleven or twelve years. I believe I shall cure her. Yours respectfully,

WM. BATTS, M.R.C.S.

George-street, Christ Church, Surrey,
Dec. 12, 1843.

THE HORRORS OF MONTFAUCON, AND THE INFLUENCE OF ITS EXHALATIONS ON THE HEALTH OF THE INHABITANTS OF PARIS.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE OF THAT CITY.

TO MEDICAL observers and hygiests, among the many interesting sights which Paris offers, none can be compared with the "voirie" of Montfaucon. Few, however, of our countrymen ever witness its hideous marvels, the Parisians who are acquainted with it, and even they are not numerous, being too proud of the beauties of their fine city to draw the attention of strangers to so unsightly a sore, as it may justly be considered. Indeed, we would not advise any one whose nerves were not inured to scenes

even more trying than those which our profession offers to its votaries in the ordinary course of their studies, to risk a visit to the great Parisian charnel-house, if they wish, at least, their recollections of Paris to be all of a pleasing nature. During a long residence in that city the writer had often formed the design of visiting Montfaucon, but never carried it into execution until a day or two before he left, and now he must confess that the lakes and mounds which it presents, mingle in the mind's eye, in a very unsatisfactory manner, with the palaces, the triumphal arches, and the beautiful gardens of the capital of France. We think our readers will be pleased to peruse a brief account of this establishment, which is not only interesting as illustrating the hygienic state of the second city in Europe, but may also furnish a lesson for this great metropolis. These are, indeed, the reasons which induce us to describe Montfaucon, a place so revolting to all feelings of delicacy, that nothing but a deep sense of the importance of the questions involved in a hygienic and even medical point of view, could have induced us to allude to it.

Montfaucon, for ages, has been the great charnel and offal-house of the French metropolis, and, in addition to this honourable destination, it also enjoyed, until the close of the last century, the distinction of possessing within its precincts the gibbet on which malefactors were executed ; a dreary scene the said malefactors must have had to close their eyes upon, one certainly not calculated to soothe their departure from this life. The gibbet has long ceased to grace the heights of Montfaucon, but time had not in any other respect shorn it of its horrors, until a year or two ago, when it was partially destroyed, as we shall presently explain. Paris is situated in a valley, through which runs the Seine, and occupies the space comprised between the river and the ridges by which the valley is formed. On the north-west side of the Seine, about two miles and a half from the river, and within half a mile of the Faubourg St. Martin, one of the most populous districts of Paris, are the hills called the "Buttes Chaumont," on the declivity of which we find Montfaucon. Thus this really awful establishment is situated within a quarter of a mile of the boundary-wall of Paris, and within a mile and a quarter of the populous Boulevard St. Martin, one of the most crowded thoroughfares. It occupies a space comprising about sixty acres, from the brow to the basis of the hill ; the latter presenting, at its highest point, an elevation of