that were more acute, it has paved the way for a rapid cure.

In the north of Ireland, in 1829, a boy was brought to me who had a most hideous eversion of the upper and under lids of the right eye, caused by two fungous growths from diseased conjunctiva. I immediately used applications of solid nitrate of silver. These, with steaming over warm water, were followed up until the excrescences had been reduced from the size of large beans, to the level of the healthy surface of the lids. The ointment I then used for a short time, and a disease existent for more than a year, was expelled in seven weeks.

When up the Mediterranean in 1828, as surgeon of the steam ship *Duke of York* (now *H.M.S. Messenger*), our firemen were sadly annoyed by a sulphurous effluvia from coal procured at Savona in Italy, and their eyes assumed that bleared appearance which may be seen in almost every smoky Irish hut. Steaming over warm water, and one application of the ointment, always gave relief.

A man, a free liver, and formerly a prize-fighter, called upon me about ten weeks since; he had been for some years nearly blind. The shadow of light was all that was admitted, owing to a net-work of blood-vessels thrown across the front of the eyes, the meshes of which were so closely interwoven, that hardly a ray could gain admission to the retina. I tried the use of the ointment, and although most of the vessels of the sclerotic conjunctiva contracted and regained their natural appearance, yet the vessels of the conjunctiva of the cornea were nearly *in statu quo*. I scarified, but it was of no avail; I then removed a portion of their trunks with scissors, applying to the bleeding ends of the vessels the solid nitras argent. I now am applying the ointment; the cornea is rapidly regaining its transparency, and the patient has vision, which for nearly seven years was lost.

To speak again of gonorrhœa. I have had many cases of it up to twelve months' standing, and it is seldom that even at that late stage my friends have to ask for a third "poke" of the bougie. If the trial and its results should prove as beneficial in other hands as it has done in mine, I shall be glad, for this simplicity of treatment in the early and latter stages of gonorrhœa, will conduce much to the alleviation of a most teasing, and, to both patient and surgeon, tedious disease and irksome attendance.

Nelson Street, Liverpool,
July 6, 1831.

BOTANY AND PHYSIOLOGY, OR THEORY OF MEDICINE, AS CONSTITUTING A PART OF MEDICAL EDUCATION.

By WILLIAM HOWISON, M.D., Lecturer
on *Materia Medica* and *Botany*.

SINCE publishing my last remarks upon botany and physiology, or theory of medicine, as constituting a part of medical and surgical education, which appeared in the Numbers of *THE LANCET* for June 13th, 1829, and May, 1830, I feel happy to see that the Apothecaries' Company of London have done that justice to botany, to which its importance, as connected with *materia medica*, entitles it, and which has been so long called for, by giving it a place as a distinct course of lectures (unfettered by the word medical, and unconnected with *materia medica*) in the course of study laid down by them for their permission to practise. I am convinced that future experience will prove to them, that in doing so they have given satisfaction to the public, and to every liberal mind, and have thereby advanced the respectability of the medical profession throughout England, over which their jurisdiction extends.

Had they, in like manner, separated physiology from anatomy, and made a distinct course of it under its own name, or converted it into a course of theory of medicine, they would have rendered their course of study complete and perfect, and have satisfied the public. I hope in the next regulations which they send out they will be convinced of the propriety of doing so, and will put this suggestion in force accordingly. I would ask, Can justice be done by the teacher to physiology, when conjoined in the same course of lectures with anatomy, and delivered at the same hour? Or, with equal propriety, I may reverse the question: Can anatomy be properly taught, when conjoined with physiology under similar circumstances? Any individual versed in the teaching of these branches of medical education, would, without hesitation, answer, No. It is the subdivision of labour which produces perfection. Anatomy alone is a subject of such importance, that it requires more than the time allotted to it in medical regulations to do it justice; and when physiology is conjoined with it, it operates to the imperfection or destruction of both. In point of fact, physiology itself would require the whole period of time for its consideration which is allotted to the two. Among the errors which have been committed in the course of study laid down for

the education of our Edinburgh surgeons and apothecaries, they have kept clear of this.

Physiology ought, undoubtedly, to have been made a distinct course of lectures also; and in place of legislating (as the Royal College of Surgeons of London and the Apothecaries' Company have done), that the student should attend two courses of anatomy, physiology, and anatomical demonstrations, they ought certainly to have said, that he should attend one distinct course of anatomy (or what would be more proper, two), and one distinct course of physiology, or, what would be preferable, of theory of medicine. That the Royal College of Surgeons of London, in their last regulations, should, in the present unfavourable state of medical education, have combined botany with *materia medica*, in a three months' course of lectures, and physiology with anatomy, in the same space of time, and still persist in doing so, in defiance of common prudence, is what sensible men must be astonished at. Would not the two learned and respectable bodies now alluded to, do well to study the beautiful and perfect regulations of the universities (even of the London University), or the correct education of the Army Medical board, which now includes six months, or two courses of botany, and a distinct six months' course of theory of medicine? The errors into which they have fallen, can only have been accidental, and will be corrected.

Why do the Navy Medical Board still refuse to give botany its due, by excluding it from their course of study, in every other respect so complete and satisfactory, when the service they supply with medical officers, from the liberal policy of our enlightened government, of late years, in promoting voyages of discovery, furnishes such an extensive and useful field for its cultivation and improvement? Does the medical officer attached to that Board (as the phrenologist might feel inclined to say) not possess the organ of appreciating the value of botany? Or is he inimical to its advancement? Or has it escaped his notice? Or have no later regulations than those of February 1826 as yet come out, allowing of the important addition of a course of botany being made to them? Is it not surprising that the Navy Medical Board should insist upon eighteen months' attendance upon surgical lectures, and omit botany altogether? I omitted to mention, that in Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c., in their medical and surgical regulations, they do not admit of physiology, as taught by the teacher of anatomy, in combination with anatomy, but presume that he confines himself to his own department alone.

Why are the genuine or original regula-

tions of the various London medical boards, the Royal College of Surgeons, the Apothecaries' Company, the Army and Navy Medical Boards, the East India Company Service medical regulations, &c., procured with such difficulty, or so little known in Edinburgh (or in Scotland), one of the first medical schools in the world, distributing innumerable pupils over the surface of the globe? We are almost entirely indebted for our knowledge of these, to the copies of them which appear in the pages of the *LANCET* and other journals. Can no plan be fallen upon for diffusing the originals more generally? Would it not be well to forward them to the various universities and Colleges of Surgeons, to be hung up in the lecture rooms of the professors and individual teachers; as also in the public hospitals and dispensaries, for the information of the pupils, their teachers, and the more advanced individuals of the medical profession; as also for the benefit of many persons unconnected with the profession, interested in the future education and advancement of their children? Whilst writing this paragraph, I sent to the shop of Messrs. Stewart and M'Lachlan, booksellers in front of the University, for the regulations of the Apothecaries' Company of London, where I was told they would be forwarded by Mr. Watson, their secretary, eight months ago, whilst in London; but I received for answer, that they had never as yet arrived.

It may be asked, Why is botany not included in the regulations of the Edinburgh College of Surgeons and Apothecaries, of late so much agitated and altered? Such an improvement has been repeatedly suggested and brought before their consideration, but as yet without success. I leave the answer of this question to what one of their number facetiously calls their influential members. By the addition of mathematics and mechanical philosophy (classes not medical), they have already made their course of education too expensive for the pockets of Scottish students.

As, ere these remarks, I have repeatedly recommended the substituting a course of theory of medicine for that of physiology in the London courses of lectures, it may be necessary for the information of those who do not know the nature of this course (and who no doubt will be surprised when informed that such a course of lectures, although strictly enjoined to be attended for twelve months by every individual entering the naval service of Great Britain, and six months by every medical man entering the army, is not in existence in London, or, so far as I know, in England), that I should mention the particulars of it as taught at Edinburgh and elsewhere. Our

lectures on the theory of medicine are only delivered during the winter and spring months; they commence about the beginning of November, and terminate about the end of April, including nearly six months; they consist of four great divisions, 1st, History of medicine; 2dly, Physiology; 3rd, Pathology, and, 4thly, Therapeutics, including the usual subdivisions of each. Attendance upon such a course of lectures for a period of six months, has been from the earliest period included in the regulations of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Glasgow, &c., for their diploma for liberty to practise.

If any individual employed in the teaching of medicine, will think it worth his time or trouble to answer one or all of these queries, he will oblige their author, and benefit the medical profession. In publishing these remarks, I may be accused of presumption; of meddling with matters with which I have nothing to do; of interfering with individuals and their actions far superior to myself, of higher rank and longer standing in the medical profession. To this, I trust, I may be allowed to reply, that no individual respects more than I do, my seniors in the profession, or those who possess greater abilities or good fortune than myself. More than ten years spent in teaching of materia medica and theory of medicine in Edinburgh, one of the first medical schools in the world, however, entitle, and I may say compel, me, to make these observations for the benefit of the medical profession.

9, Nicolson Square, Edinburgh;
May (received in July), 1831.

MR. COSTELLO ON LITHOTRITY.—At the annual public sitting of the Academy of Medicine, which has just taken place, "honourable mention" (according to academic phraseology) was accorded to the memoir of our countryman, Mr. Costello, on the comparative merits, difficulties, &c., of the lithontritic and section operations. Mr. Costello was the only foreigner who received this compliment.

DR. WEATHERILL'S CASE OF EXCISION OF THE CERVIX UTERI.—It is stated in a letter by Dr. C. F. Hildreth of Boston, in America, that the patient who was the subject of the above operation died ten months afterwards, under Dr. H.'s care, of the disease for which she was operated on, while he was physician to the Boston Infirmary. The body was not examined after death.

TRIAL IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.

COLLIER *v.* SIMPSON.

"It would be highly advantageous to the public, and likewise to the best part of the medical profession, if the elements of modern medicine were made a portion of the liberal education of every gentleman; for then medical men and medical measures would be under the wholesome control of public opinion, so that practitioners would be estimated by their merit, and some of our corporate institutions would undergo those salutary changes which are imperatively demanded by the increased intelligence of the age."—*Armstrong.*

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I take the liberty of calling your attention, as an independent medical journalist, and, through your publication, the attention of the medical profession generally, to the evidence of the physicians subpoenaed by the plaintiff in the late trial of *COLLIER versus SIMPSON*, in the Court of Common Pleas.

In publishing this evidence, I disclaim all personal feeling, but think it highly important that it should be laid before the medical profession as illustrative of the necessity of medical reform. I would, therefore, only premise, that this was an action for slander brought by a physician who had received a license from the London College of Physicians about three weeks previous to the cause of action, against a member of the College of Surgeons and a general practitioner.

The plaintiff prescribed for a child seven years of age, who was supposed to be labouring under hydrocephalus, *a two-ounce mixture, composed of an ounce of the infusion of digitalis, and an ounce of the solution of corrosive sublimate; two teaspoonfuls to be given every three hours for the first three doses, and afterwards every four hours.* The defendant, who had previously been attending the child, on being shown the prescription by the parent after it had been continued two days, said, "This medicine is a rank poison, I would not give it to a child of mine." He was said by the parent, who is a poor ignorant woman, also to have called it "hog's vomit" (oxymuriate), or some such word: this was the slander for which the action was brought. On the plaintiff being told the defendant's observations, he immediately consulted with Sir Henry Hallford, by whose advice the medicine was discontinued, and two teaspoonfuls of a mixture composed of ten drops of *laudanum* and an ounce of *aniseed water*, to be given every six hours, were substituted. To speak to the propriety of the