just; it is the duty of a gentleman, if unprovoked, to be polite. I know not that I ever provoked Mr. Whitaker, that he should write with so much asperity. I am afraid that he is either vexed with himself from an intimate acquaintance with his own character, or that the public think less of him than he thinks they ought; but why attack me so unceremoniously? Mr. Whitaker has heard of, perhaps was acquainted with, Dr. Armstrong. Why not endeavour in some measure to imitate that illustrious physician? In Dr. Armstrong were pleasingly combined the gentleman and the philosopher. If Mr. Whitaker will not be the one, why not strive as far as possible to be the other? I shall not again reply to Mr. Whitaker, unless his communications be characterised by calm reasoning and proper feeling.—I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY REES.

45, Finsbury Square,
March 12, 1832.

[Our intelligent correspondents cannot fail to perceive, that no advantage can result from continuing this controversy.—ED. L.]

LETTER FROM MR. HOOPER IN REPLY TO
"INVESTIGATOR," PAGE 842.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have no itch for scribbling, and less leisure to answer anonymous writers, at the same time I cannot tamely submit to a gratuitous slander, such as has been given to the public in your columns of last week, under the signature of "Investigator," without an attempt at justification. I perceive your correspondent has taken his authority from *The Times*. This, Sir, speaks volumes. I thought there could not be found in London a medical man who would put the slightest confidence in any statement published in a paper that had libelled the whole profession, and twisted and perverted the truth, relative to the prevailing epidemic, in the most criminal and base manner.

I cannot be accountable, Sir, for the stupidity of *The Times* reporter, but I deny that I "wisely avoided the awkward question of the coroner," as stated by "Investigator." My answer was, that it was not usual to allow a large quantity of water to accumulate in the bladder, but as this man was passing small quantities of urine every day, and as the case was supposed to be one of paralysis of the bladder, from some injury done to the sacral nerves, it was the best practice to allow the urine to act as a stimulant to the bladder till it contracted

upon its contents. Should this explanation not be satisfactory to "Investigator," as I shall not again address him on the subject, I would advise him to *investigate* the bladder (which he will find at the museum of the London University), rather than the incorrect reports of *The Times*, where he may convince himself that the rupture took place at the time of the fall, and not by ulceration, as insinuated by him. Had I known as much of the nature of the injury, before the *post-mortem* examination as "Investigator" appears to know after it, I might have adopted other treatment, but certainly could not have saved my patient. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

R. L. HOOPER.

London Road, March 12, 1832.

THE LATE DR. HOPKINS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to inclose for insertion in your journal, an account of the post-mortem appearances of Dr. Hopkins, as furnished by his medical attendant. I am Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE F. KNOX.

14, George Street, Adelphi,
March 12, 1832.

AUTOPSY OF DR. HOPKINS TWENTY-FOUR
HOURS AFTER DEATH.

AFTER having treated the patient for six months in the manner usually adopted in cases of ascites, which in this instance I presumed was accompanied by engorgement of the liver, and having three times performed paracentesis, the patient gradually sunk and expired.

Looking at the general exterior of the patient, there was considerable emaciation, marked by universal anasarca. In the abdominal cavity the intestines were found to be of a slate colour; the mucous membrane of the stomach was softened, and was easily torn from its attachment by the handle of the scalpel; great degeneration of substance existed in the liver; its body was considerably augmented, and yet its inferior margin hardly extended below the edge of the hypochoondrium. This augmentation existed principally on the convex surface of the organ; there was a remarkable contrast between the colour of the surface and that which was presented when its substance was divided, the two sides of the section were of a dark-red tint, and presented an exudation of blood; the vena portarum was at least twice as large as natural,

and its branches were dilated in proportion. In the thorax, the right pleura contained about three ounces of serum; the lung was of a blackish colour, and studded with dark melanose tubercles, about the size of hazelnuts, and considerably softened; the whole pulmonary parenchyma was gorged with blood, as in acute peripneumony. In consequence of these various lesions, this lung was totally unfit for respiration; the left cavity contained no fluid, and the lung was sound.

The left auriculo-ventricular opening of the heart was ossified in its whole circumference for about three lines in breadth; this morbid deviation had its seat in the internal membrane, extended into the tricuspid valves, and produced a singular contraction in the ostium: white and gelatinous coagula, formerly considered as polypi, were found in the chambers of the heart, and at the origin of the great vessels. In conclusion, the lesion of the heart appears to me to be the original disorder, and to which ought to be referred successively all the subsequent derangements.

(Signed) MOQUE, D.M.P.

Libourne, Feb. 1st, 1832.

EVIDENCE OF MEDICAL MEN AGAINST THEIR PROFESSIONAL BROTHERN IN COURTS OF LAW.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—You are doubtless aware that an action was lately brought against Dr. Blicke of Walthamstow, for alleged mala praxis in the case of a man whose leg had been broken, and whom Dr. Blicke had attended during illness. I was in court at the time of the trial, on the 24th ult., and from the number of counsel engaged in it, I should think that the expenses of the action on the two sides could not have been much less than four hundred pounds. How awful then may be the situation in which a medical man is placed on these occasions, and how important is it that those professional men who have to give evidence against a defendant, should learn fully the facts of the case before going into court, where, probably, from misinformation, they may wantonly, though inadvertently, be the means of totally ruining a practitioner, by giving evidence (which, though erroneous, and subsequently fully proved to be so), leaves an impression on the minds of the jury that no correction can efface! Viewing the matter in this light, I suggest that it would be in strict accordance with honest

feeling and public right, that a medical man who is to be evidence for a plaintiff should first of all go to the defendant and candidly say, "I have had such and such statements made to me; let me hear what answer you have to give to them." Then if there be a good answer, he would know the truth, and if a bad one, he still would do no less justice in court to the plaintiff for whom he is engaged. This proposal is worthy the consideration of all men who may be thus situated.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

L. S. E.

London, March 7th, 1832.

CORRESPONDENTS, &c.

We received a request from Dr. BLICKE to omit certain portions of his letter (pages 858-9) at so late an hour that we had no means of complying with his wish but by deleting so many words and supplying their places by asterisks, the sheet being already at press.

C. of Hull. Sufficient *materiel* could not be obtained for any practical purpose. The re-plete are not so willing to *de-plete*. We shall be glad to hear the results of any experiments which C. may unfortunately have occasion to try.

C. has only experienced treatment similar to that shown to scores of others. The public has a remedy in its own hands.

We regret to say that such applications as the one referred to by *Mr. W. S. B.* are of *daily occurrence*, and, from the distressed state of the profession, fail, without exception, to accomplish the objects of the applicants. It is in vain to present the suggested petition.

We should notice the report of the Chelmsford Philosophical Society, but do not see how, from the brief communication before us, we can render the Society any benefit by doing so.

The theory of *Tyro* is not new, or we should insert his letter.

An Old Subscriber. They will be ready.

We shall be obliged to *C. F.* if he will make his writing a little more legible.

We are compelled, by want of space, to omit a report of the last proceedings at the London Medical Society.

ERRATUM.—In some of the copies of this Number, p. 820, col. 2, l. 14, read "a limbering hot air and vapour baths."