months since, had not a gentleman (at one time a colleague and a long time a friend of the late Dr. Armstrong) who promised us many interesting particulars, been incapacitated from writing by an afflicting illness.]

PRICE OF SUBJECTS IN PARIS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I observed in the last Number of your Journal an article on "medical education," to which was appended a note, stating the price of subjects to be in Paris about ten shillings. I beg to inform you that for the last three years I have resided in Paris, and have had an opportunity of knowing the price of subjects, and I assure you that five francs, or four shillings and twopence, is the uniform price for unopened subjects, and three francs, or two shillings and sixpence, for opened ones.

I am, Sir, respectfully yours,
JOHN FORDE.

23, Castle Street, June 1.

SAFETY-CHAIR FOR THE BETTER
PROTECTION OF
INSANE PERSONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I trust that the ambiguous character which has been so long and so unceremoniously associated with the name of "mad doctor," and which I fear has had any other than an encouraging tendency towards the advancement of this department of our science, is at length repudiated; that a new era has arisen when this branch of the healing art will no longer be considered of a degrading nature; and when indeed those who undertake so arduous and dangerous, as well as disagreeable a part of the profession, will be supported and looked upon, as mitigators and consolers of human misery, instead of being stigmatized as mercenaries,—stripped of their integrity, honour, and character, and all that a man values who follows a distinguished and honourable profession.

Insanity, I conceive, under its manifold forms and irregular manifestations, solicits more practical attention from the medical practitioner than has ever yet been bestowed upon it; there surely is no disorder of greater importance to mankind; nay, I will venture to say there is no malady deserving of so much profound consideration when we

reflect on the disability immediately consequent on its appearance—at once depriving a fellow-creature of his mental endowments, and divesting him of his natural liberty. And yet perhaps there is no disorder so imperfectly understood, or so little under the control of medicinal remedies. To define it we are unable; and to point out its primitive cause we are equally at a loss.

With these preliminary remarks, and with the confidence that all who possess opportunities will apply themselves not only in tracing the causes, the effects, and the remedies, but the corporeal amelioration of this malady, I am induced to send you a few observations on the latter and very important part of its management. Having turned my attention, and I am led to believe with some success, toward a better and a more humane mode of restraining insane persons, and having given the plan a fair trial in my own establishment, as well as having received most encouraging testimony from the director of an extensive asylum in the country, where also it has been successfully tried, I can with some degree of confidence recommend it as a humane and beneficial improvement.

Many ingenious contrivances have been from time immemorial constructed for the purpose of restraining and protecting lunatics, but all of them have imperfections, and many are altogether highly objectionable; some, it may be remarked, produce injurious consequences by constraining and pressing on the stomach, liver, diaphragm, and abdomen, others impede the return of blood from the head, thereby adding to any existing local determination or congestion, whilst many violently compress the muscles of the arms and thorax, and produce much difficulty in expanding the chest, besides, in many instances, inducing a morbid heat of the body; and added to these may be noticed the circumstance of the legs and arms of patients being frequently cut with ligatures improperly applied, and sometimes fretted and discoloured by the application of iron leg and wrist locks.

Having, through a life which has been spent in asylums, seriously observed these defects, and the ill consequences attending them, and having remarked, moreover, that there are even cases for which there has been as yet no efficient kind of restraint suggested, I have endeavoured in the construction of the apparatus or chair, which I am now desirous of offering to the notice of the profession, to secure the united advantages of the present plans, without their consequent objections; I am aware, nevertheless it might be invidiously said, that greater merit would be due to him who sought a cure for this unhappy malady, than to him who exercised his ingenuity in de-