QUESTIONS TO SIR A. HALLIDAY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If Sir Andrew Halliday will give plain answers of *yes* or *no* to the following questions, and not twist his evidence, as Mr. Bowen appears to have twisted off one or both of the arms of the infant, the public will be able to understand what he means, and it will in some measure tend to remove the doubts that the unsatisfactory testimony given by him on the inquest could not fail to produce; it will, besides, save him the trouble of further explanations, or appeals, to the public for the purpose of correcting his errors. It is besides but an act of justice to Mr. Bowen that this fact should be clearly ascertained, whether he gave the information to Sir A. Halliday, which Sir A. afterwards communicated to Mr. Sells, Mr. Taylor, and others:—

Whether Mr. Sells ever, and when, told him “that he had been informed, by a Mr. Russell (or any other person or persons), that Mr. Bowen had taken, or torn, off the arms of the infant of the late Fras. Clarke, and had not delivered the mother?”

Whether he communicated this information to Mr. Bowen, and when?

Whether Mr. Bowen on that, or some other, and what occasion, did not inform him, “that the report was untrue,” and that he had not taken, or torn, off the arms of the infant, and had delivered the mother?

Whether he, Sir A. Halliday, did not afterwards, and when, inform Mr. Sells, “that he had seen Mr. Bowen, who had assured him that he had not twisted, or torn, off the arms of the infant, but had opened the head and delivered the mother, and that she died from exhaustion?”

Whether he did not make the same statement to Mr. Taylor, and request him to contradict the report of Mr. Bowen’s having done so; and whether he has not acknowledged and admitted, in some letter or letters written by him to Mr. Sells and Mr. Taylor, or one or both, and which of them, “that Mr. Bowen had informed him, that he had not taken off the arms of the infant and had delivered the mother?”

Whether he did not, at his own house, in Sept. last, inform Mr. Guy “that Mr. Bowen had told him that he had not taken, or torn off, the infant’s arms, and had delivered the woman, and that she died from exhaustion?”

Whether, on the inspection of the bodies of the infant and the mother, it did not appear that the arms of the child had been torn off from the body, and that the mother had not been delivered?

Your most obedient servant,

AN INHABITANT OF HAMPTON.

Oct. 30th.

LETTER FROM MR. GEORGE TAYLOR OF KINGSTON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is with great reluctance that I feel myself imperatively called upon to address you for the purpose of repelling several unfounded accusations that have been, and still are, circulated against me, in the dangerous form of insinuation and report, connected with a recent investigation at Hampton. I should have treated such falsehoods with contempt, and would have confidently depended upon public opinion, and upon my established integrity and conduct through life, if a plausible colouring had not been given to one of the charges deeply involving my character.

The following are the reports to which I allude.

1st.—That I refused to give my professional assistance in the case of the deceased, though sent for by Mr. Bowen.

2nd.—That I invented and propagated a falsehood, and screened myself by attributing it to Sir Andrew Halliday.

3rd.—That I encouraged, and have been one of a secret committee or party for the purpose of getting up, a malicious inquiry calculated to injure a professional man in public opinion.

4th.—That I employed, and am to pay, the solicitor who brought the inquiry before the inquest.

These appear to me to be grave charges; and if the following refutations be not considered clear and conclusive, I invite the closest scrutiny into my conduct upon this or upon any other occasion.

To the first charge I reply, that the messenger admitted that he came to me without the consent of Mr. Bowen; and that when my answer, that I would willingly attend if invited by Mr. Bowen, was received, it is in evidence that he replied, “If Mr. Taylor came he would go out of the house.”

To the second charge; Sir Andrew Halliday swore upon the inquest that Mr. Bowen never told him “that he had not taken off the child’s arms and that he had delivered the deceased,” I do most positively assert that Sir Andrew Halliday told me (and he has by his letter since the inquest admitted the fact) that this conversation, now denied, did actually take place between him and Mr. Bowen; and Sir Andrew Halliday, at the same time, authorised me (as I believe with a kind motive) to give a flat denial to the report of the midwife, “that the child’s arms were cut off, and that the woman had died undelivered.”

To the third charge; I deny most solemnly that I have been one of any secret party or committee, for such or any other unworthy

purpose ; but I freely admit that I always entertained an unfavourable opinion of the case, and I suppose that no one, who understands any-thing of the subject, who heard the evidence and witnessed the examination of the bodies, will assert that I was not amply justified in that opinion, although I willingly abstained from expressing it at the inquest.

To the fourth charge ; I declare upon my honour, that I neither employed, nor am I to pay any-thing directly or indirectly to, the solicitor who conducted the inquiry, and who, I have since ascertained, had a written authority from the husband of the deceased to inquire into the causes that led to the death of his wife and child.

Yours, most obediently,

GEORGE TAYLOR.

Kingston, October 9th, 1830.

WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL.

REMOVAL OF THE HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In this day's Number you have not published the documents relative to the Westminster Hospital promised in your Number of the 9th ultimo, but you have done what, differing from you *toto cælo* as to the merits of the case, I consider much worse, you have thrown your sword into the wrong scale, given the weight of your advocacy to the party which is, in my opinion, unquestionably the weaker in argument, as it is in numbers. Allow me a few lines in reply. Is it true that what is now popularly called the *Westminster Hospital* was "established for the benefit of the poor in its immediate vicinity?" The history of the charity published not long since in your own pages (July 17, 1830) answers No! Is the object of the "removal party, the conversion of the hospital into a medical school for the benefit of (more lucrative to) the medical officers?" No! such is not their intention. The removal will, I sincerely hope, greatly benefit the officers, for that benefit is contingent upon, and consequent to, the increase of prosperity that the charity must, from the greater prominence and convenience of its new site, quickly experience. The general interests of the charity and the private interests of the medical officers are concurrent and connected, but by no means, or rather by no necessity of things, antagonist interests. The greater the publicity and extent of accommodation of the charity, the greater its claims on the public, and the more numerous its contributors of all kinds; the greater also, of course, the advantages of the medical officers in reputation, in hos-

pital fees, and in every other species of emolument derivable from their appointments. The permanent and real interests of the charity and its officers recede or advance together; they bear by no means an inverse ratio to each other, as you seem to think, but obviously, I maintain, a direct ratio. Is the site of the present hospital not an obscure one? Compare it with neighbouring subscription hospitals, St. George's, the Middlesex, where is the avenue to it like Piccadilly, or Mortimer, Goodge, or Berners Streets? possibly, for you speak confidently, you have an account of the number of fashionable or respectable equipages or pedestrians that pass within sight of it daily; if you have, does the amount equal the one-tenth of what passes by either of the other hospitals proposed for comparison? But its present site is likely to be hereafter much more conspicuous you will say, possibly, but when? Its present site is wholesome, more so, you declare, than that to which it is proposed to remove it. How has that been ascertained? Complaints have not reached you that "erysipelas, hospital gangrene, &c., are common in the wards." "The hospital is at the corner of the Park, &c." Now I have been some time a trustee, and have officiated as house-visitor, and am well acquainted with the hospital, and I affirm that such complaints have been made, and frequently made, though probably not to the "public," by which, from your reasoning, I imagine, you must mean by something equivalent to an advertisement in the "Times" or in your own powerful Journal—the "Times," as I may say, of the medical world. Furthermore, are you not fully aware that ague and other malarious diseases, are not unfrequently generated in the vicinity of the present hospital, and more frequently there than north of Charing Cross? You object to the rent of 700*l.* or 800*l.*, demanded by Government; are you aware that the medical officers propose to bind themselves down to pay 400*l.* per annum of that sum? You know that it is of course in the power of the trustees to accept that offer, and to bind down their successors for ever to that, or even to a larger amount. But the trustees will not do so; it may be, it has been said, they are too blind or too indifferent no doubt to the interests of the charity to avail themselves of their power of prescribing to candidates the conditions of election; nay, perhaps they will even make the present incumbents a present of the 400*l.*, some fine morning of the years 1830-1-2-3, or some approaching year; will you maintain that? The increase of wealth and internal accommodation that would follow on the removal is an argument, valid, you declare, against the change of site. It is a reason why the benevolent should pa-