With regard to the note, if she had written that note to Foster, it was a strong corroboration of his statement. He was anxious to consider Foster's evidence dispassionately. When Foster went into that box, he heard hissing in the court; and, certainly, on the face of it, there was something very disgraceful and revolting in the idea of a man standing up to state that he had enjoyed a lady's favours; but the whole question was, as to whether he spoke truly. Suppose that any one had met with an abandoned woman in the streets, and had over and over again been acquainted with her; and suppose he heard that she was about to swear a child to his friend, would he not be justified then in coming forward to state the truth? If a man had seduced a woman who was perfectly modest before, that would be a very different case; and if that man spoke falsely under such circumstances, then he would be the most disgraceful scoundrel on earth. But it all depended upon whether this girl was a loose character, and whether Foster himself were conscious that he was father. In that case, what was there in his evidence to hold him up to public reprobation? Was that good sense or not? If they believed that he was perjured, then, indeed, he was the most atrocious of liars. He (his Lordship) would state a fact that came within the knowledge of himself, and many barristers then in the court, where a girl swore a child to one gentleman, when it was pretty well understood that there was another gentleman in court who knew himself to be the father. He perfectly well knew what was thought throughout the city of the silence of that gentleman; and yet if he had got up in court and given evidence of the fact, he would have been liable to be hissed as this witness had been. He had given them the whole of the evidence, because he wished a little time to interpose between the very eloquent speech of Mr. Crowder and their deliberations. There were two questions before them. Was the defendant the father of the child, and, if so, what damages would they award? They were not a court of justice for punishing the parties. If he seduced this girl by crafty arts, and that she was virtuous before the promise of marriage, they ought to give ample damages; but the main difficulty was, for them to believe that the defendant was the father.

The Jury laid their heads very closely together for about a quarter of an hour, and then returned a VERDICT FOR PLAINTIFF—Damages £150.—(*Cheers in the gallery.*)

THE NON-LINNÆAN DISSERTATIONES ACADEMICÆ.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I am sorry again to have the task imposed upon me of correcting the egregious

errors committed by Mr. Houlton in his letters. Mr. Houlton states, "that he never knew any one but Dr. Sigmond to entertain a doubt that these 'Dissertationes Academicæ,' which are well known to all persons who have studied the great master, Linnæus, to be one of the genuine works of Linnæus." This is one of the most extraordinary blunders ever made by a man pretending to know anything of the subject. These dissertations were the theses delivered in by the young men who graduated at the university whilst Linnæus was President; and Mr. Houlton might almost as well say, that because the name of George Baird appeared for so many years upon every thesis that was delivered at Edinburgh whilst he was President, that he was the author of all the Edinburgh theses. I will, however, with your permission, quote Dr. Pulteney's account of these dissertations, as he has given it in the life of Linnæus:—

"In 1749 was published the first volume of a collection of dissertations in octavo, under the title of 'Amœnitates Academicæ, seu Dissertationes variæ Physicæ, Medicæ, et Botanicæ.' Linnæus and Camper both published it in the same year; the former at Stockholm, and the latter at Leyden; but Linnæus alone continued the whole work afterwards, though the volumes were all constantly reprinted as soon as published, both in Germany and in Holland. As these academical theses were sustained under Linnæus, in his professional capacity, and selected chiefly by himself, they have been regarded as of equal authority, nearly, with his own writings, various parts of which they extend and exemplify in a particular manner."

Mr. Houlton says, that the opinion is peculiar to Dr. Sigmond, that the dissertation in the "Amœnitates," entitled "Odores Medicamentorum," was by a pupil of Linnæus, named Wahlin, and that another on "Medicamenta Graveolentia," was written by Fagræus; and he thinks them to be the genuine works of Linnæus. These blunders are of the same kind, as Mr. Houlton will see, if he will read the titles of the papers. That of the "Odores" is thus given: "Odores Medicamentorum quos, præside D. Doct. Carolo Linnæo, publicæ censuræ modeste submittet Andreas Wahlen."

Mr. Houlton concludes his inaccuracies by saying, apropos, "I should like to know why Dr. Sigmond calls the aphorisms of Linnæus, Postulatums." And that when he, Mr. Houlton, read Euclid many years ago, he learned that a postulate was something assumed without proof. In the first place, I did not call an aphorism a *postulatum*, but I made use of the very words employed in the analyses of Fagræus' paper, entitled, "Medicamenta Graveolentia;" and if Mr. Houlton will refer to Pulteney, he will find it commence thus: "It is a *postulatum* in

the philosophy of Linnæus that the qualities of medicines are, in a general way, to be determined by their effects on the organs of taste and smell." The definition that I have been taught of *postulatum*, differs most essentially from that which Mr. Houlton has given. I quote an authority which I do not think is to be disputed, when I give him the following explanation of a *postulatum*: "Postulates are fundamental principles, in any art or science, which are taken for granted as being such easy and self-evident propositions as need no explication or illustration to render them more plain."

I take my leave of Mr. Houlton, as I have occupations of more consequence to myself than replying to his ill-founded assertions, and shall not again notice any communication he may make. I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE G. SIGMOND, M.D.

24, Dover-street, July 29, 1840.

LETTER FROM MR. OWEN.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Perceiving in THE LANCET for July 25, another article connected with the comparison of Mr. Nasmyth's discoveries and mine, I beg to say that it is not my intention to reply to that paper; and that, so far as I am concerned, this controversy is at an end. I have asserted nothing, in my published observations upon this subject, which I do not know to be true; but I owe it to myself to express my regret, that the irritation produced by the charges so pertinaciously advanced against me, should have led me, in some passages, into the employment of language which my calmer judgment disapproves. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

R. OWEN.

London, July 28, 1840.

OPERATION ON MR. WATT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Having been shown THE LANCET of the 18th instant, a letter containing some illiberal observations against Sir Richard Dobson, for having permitted Mr. Liston to amputate the arm of my late lamented husband, Mr. Watt, formerly assistant-surgeon of Greenwich Hospital, and having also seen Sir Richard Dobson's reply to the above, I shall feel much obliged if you will permit me to state in your valuable Journal that his explanation of the operation is strictly true.

Will you, also, permit me to express my sense of Sir R. Dobson's kindness in yielding to my feelings, in allowing one long

known to my family to operate on that unfortunate occasion, and to express my extreme regret that his kindness and liberality should have been so misconstrued. I am, Sir, your much obliged servant,

R. SAMPLE WATT.

2, Bennett-street, East Greenwich,

August 3, 1840.

* * * The letter of Sir Richard Dobson, last week, was perfectly satisfactory, but we yield our own judgment respecting the necessity of inserting the above note to that of the lady who deemed it right to send it.

MANUFACTURE OF PHYSICIANS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—It is notorious that a man may obtain the degree of "Doctor of Medicine" (the highest grade of rank in the profession), with the slightest *evidence* of medical education. For instance, an apothecary of this town, who was in practice before 1815, and, therefore, not needing to possess the Apothecaries' licence, this year retired from general practice, went to town, and bought a degree of M.D. from a German University; and by a late regulation of the London College of Physicians, with a mere examination *pro formâ* obtained its licence to style himself Member of the Royal College of Physicians, London. This degree (from Erlangen) was not obtained without, at least, a show of knowledge and professional acquirement. His thesis on the occasion is entitled "Description of a New Modification of the Obstetrical Vectis," and extends to about three pages of a description of the instrument and its mode of application (equal to a column of THE LANCET), and to five pages of cases. The only peculiarity in the instrument, is its being a little more bent than the ordinary lever, and being, therefore, *not a little* more dangerous to mother and child. Its mode of application is precisely the same as that of all levers that ever were or will be made, and the cases are of an every-day kind. When, in the true spirit of those who recommend cures for all diseases, the author says that he applies his lever to the groin in breech cases, *the breadth of the blade at the curve being one inch and seven-eighths*, it is impossible to avoid carrying one's eye forwards to the next paragraph, to see whether the author did not also use it for turning. In Case 4, where the head was "*immoveably* fixed in the brim of the pelvis," with the face to the pubis, the author pleasantly says, that after his two pupils had failed, "I, however, easily succeeded, by converting the presentation into a natural one."

In order to obtain credentials to practise as an apothecary, the worst remunerated grade in the profession, it requires an ap-