restraint from the custody of keepers and nurses, and a legislative prohibition of their use, except medicinally, and under the direction of a skilful physician, the cause of humanity will have gained greatly by the contest. But I do not deny that I myself believe that the cause will stand the test of experience, and ultimately succeed altogether, at all events.

A discussion founded on such data, and conducted in the spirit and temper which these gentlemen have thrown into it, must tend to the advancement of science and the establishment of truth.

To use Dr. Conolly's own words, in his valuable report, "No science furnishes more lessons against presumption than medicine; none requiring a greater number of circumstances to be taken into consideration, and tested by experiment, before arriving at rules of general application." And it is most gratifying to find that the asylums at Lancaster, Montrose, Northampton, &c., are following in the same steps. In the splendid establishment at Hanwell, abundant opportunities are now daily afforded of testing by experience the soundness of the system there pursued. Great, indeed, are the obstacles against which Dr. Conolly has had, and still has, to contend, as the proceedings at the Middlesex quarter-sessions abundantly prove; but, as Mr. Stilwell justly observes, the County have resolved to give the experiment a fair trial; and, thus supported, whether his endeavours may or may not be successful to their full extent, they must be productive of most beneficial improvements in the treatment of the insane, and redound to the eternal honour of himself and his supporters. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A LOOKER-ON.

Dec. 8, 1840.

REMOVAL OF THE DISCOLORATION PRODUCED BY NITRATE OF SILVER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I am not aware that it is generally known that the hydriodate of potass will instantly remove from the skin the stains caused by the nitrate of silver. In those unsightly discolorations of the skin following the internal use of the nitrate, would it not be worth the while to give the hydr. of potass a trial, by using it internally as well as by the endermic method? Perhaps some one of your readers may have an opportunity of making the trial, which, if successful, would remove the greatest drawback to the use of this most potent and useful medicine. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS DAWSON.

Bicester, Nov. 16, 1840.

CERTIFICATES TO QUACKS.

THE propriety of indulging in the indiscriminate habit of giving "certificates and testimonials" of supposed ability, even to *legally qualified* members of the profession, is agreeably illustrated by the quackish purpose to which such a document has been placed in the following paragraph, printed under the head of "Local Intelligence" in the *Chester Courant* of Oct. 27th, last. It deserves republication:—

"DEAFNESS, &c.—Those who suffer from deafness and other diseases of the ear, will be glad to learn that Mr. Downing, surgeon-aunist, member of the Royal College of Surgeons of London, is at present in this city, on a professional visit, for a short time. A correspondent states, 'an old gentleman, who, to our knowledge, had been extremely deaf as long as we can remember, and a gentleman who had been deaf the last twenty years, have been effectually relieved by Mr. Downing, in the course of a few days. A lady, who had been subject from her infancy to deafness, a disagreeable discharge, and constant singing in both ears; a clergyman, deaf of one ear nearly twenty years; and the lady of a clergyman, who was deaf upwards of ten years, have also, with many others, been speedily freed from their complaints, by simple treatment, under Mr. Downing's attention.'"

"From what I have known and learnt of Mr. Downing, I feel much confidence in bearing testimony to his attainments in his profession, and my belief in his capacity to perform his duty skilfully, in whatever situation he may be placed."—Sir Astley Cooper, Bart.

Persons desirous of obtaining Mr. Downing's assistance, will have an opportunity of seeing him, for a short time, at 14, Paradise-row, between the hours of ten and two.

MIDDLESEX LUNACY MAGISTRATES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—"PHILANTHROPOS" has, although most unintentionally, done great injustice to the visiting justices of the Hanwell Asylum, by selecting three of them as the supporters of the humane system there adopted. The committee consists of *fifteen* persons, and of the remaining *twelve* ten are as zealous in their support as the three gentlemen named; two, only, of the committee, viz., Mr. Gibbon and Mr. Laurie, as you will find upon reference to their speeches, in the papers, at the late meeting of Middlesex magistrates, entertaining any doubts either of the practicability or utility of the system. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Nov. 23, 1840.

PHARMACOPOLA.