Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE AUDITORY METHOD OF DETECTING
STONE IN THE BLADDER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—When the microphone was first employed to intensify the note produced in sounding for stone, Mr. Foveaux, then with Messrs. Weiss and Son, suggested the plan of connecting the sound with the ear by means of an india-rubber tube, precisely in the manner just proposed by Mr. Davidson. It was tried by Sir Henry Thompson, by myself, and by one or two others, with the result now described—viz., that of rendering very slight contact with a hard body audible, although the microphone was undoubtedly more powerful in its results. There was this objection, however, to the india-rubber tube—which, by the way, need only be quite small—namely, that it interferes with the delicate handling necessary to perform those movements of light sounding which are alone of any service in searching for a small calculus or fragment. If the tube is thick or heavy, no really delicate exploration with a sound can take place, and no other mode is worth cultivating to be of any service; a fact perhaps not generally estimated at its true value. It is not with the slightest desire to detract from the credit of original idea or of ingenious resource justly due to Mr. Davidson that this is named, but to show that the plan has already been considered, and to a certain extent appreciated. Sounding for small fragments is now a thing of the past. The proceeding is required only to find the original stone, when it is small if possible, and therefore as early as its presence can be verified. The modern aspirator (*vide* THE LANCET, Jan. 7th, 1882, page 2), especially with the latest improvements, reveals, as well as removes, fragments far more certainly than any other instrument, enabling us to complete lithotripsy at one sitting; after which it is very rare indeed now to have any further trouble in "searching for a last fragment."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

Wimpole-street, W., July, 1882.

G. BUCKSTON BROWN.

"THE BRAINS OF CRIMINALS."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue of June 3rd you comment on Professor Benedikt's views on the above subject, and state that according to the *New York Medical Record* I had adduced counter facts and statistics which involve "the collapse of Professor Benedikt's attempt to furnish an anatomical basis for crime." My limited observations scarcely justify such an expression. In the brains of two murderers which I had the opportunity of examining many of the fissures were of the so-called confluent type. I then proceeded to examine the arrangement of the convolutions and sulci in my collection of brains, and found that in sixty-three hemispheres a considerable proportion of the fissures were more or less confluent. My conclusions were as follows:—

1. That a considerable proportion of the brains of hospital patients are of the confluent fissure type.

2. The chief difference to be noted between Professor Benedikt's series of criminals' brains and those which I have gone over, is the somewhat greater number of unions between typical fissures, more particularly between the fissure of Rolando and contiguous ones. Thus in his set of thirty-eight hemispheres, this fissure connected completely or incompletely with the fissure of Sylvius in twenty-four instances; in my series in only ten. In the other fissures the disproportion is not nearly so great.

3. Considering the number of brains of ordinary hospital patients which present in some degree the confluent fissure type, it would seem more reasonable not to assign as yet any special significance to it until we have fuller information about the arrangement of the convolutions in the various races, and until a much larger number of the brains of criminals of all countries have been examined.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM OSLER.

Physiological Laboratory, McGill College, Montreal.
June 12th, 1882.

IRELAND.

(From our own Correspondent.)

IN 1866 cholera was brought into Dublin by the removal to one of the city hospitals of a patient from the ship by which he arrived in port. Owing to a belief that a fresh invasion of the same dreaded disease was likely to take place in 1874, a port hospital ship was constructed and placed in the harbour during that year, with a view of intercepting contagious diseases coming from other parts. The Corporation and the North and South Dublin Boards of Guardians wish now to get rid of the expense of keeping up the floating hospital, which has cost upwards of £2000, and accommodated, it is said, only one patient since its establishment. The Dublin Sanitary Association are, however, opposed to its abolition, and believe that a means of intercepting diseases which past experience has shown are introduced from abroad, should not for the sake of a very small outlay be discontinued. They point out, further, that the object of the hospital is not to treat cases once disease has broken out, but to anticipate outbreaks of disease by preventing their introduction on shore.

The "Hudson" prizes of the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, have this year been awarded to Mr. Austin Nathaniel Cooper (first prize) and Dr. Bradshaw. They were founded by the late Dr. Alfred Hudson, formerly one of the physicians of the hospital, for the express object of encouraging clinical and surgical study amongst advanced students. This is the second occasion these prizes have been awarded. The gentleman who obtained the first prize was also successful in carrying off the first prize in the senior class at the College of Surgeons Medical School this year, consisting of the gold medal and £10.

Dr. James Emerson Reynolds, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Dublin, will, it is announced, continue to hold the chair for another term of seven years.

A death under singular circumstances recently took place near Killarney. A young lad, seventeen years of age, had collected some rushes, and these, with a rope, he suspended on his back. Whilst proceeding over a wire fence six feet high, he got by some means entangled at the top of the paling, and, the rope being applied round his neck, he was unable to extricate himself, and remained suspended, with the rushes at the other side of the fence, until life was extinct.

Mr. W. Thomson's case of ligature of the innominate artery, to which allusion has already been made, still progresses fairly. The deeper sinuses seem to be closed, there is but little suppuration, and every prospect of a successful result to a most important operation.

The question of building a new general hospital for Belfast, to be constructed on the most approved plans and on a site more convenient than that of the Belfast Royal Hospital, has lately been brought before the public. It is alleged that the only general hospital in the town—the Belfast Royal Hospital, with 160 beds—is totally inadequate for a large and prosperous place like Belfast. It is urged that its sanitary arrangements are defective, that the situation is not a desirable one, and, in the interests of the community and the daily increasing importance of the Medical School, that steps should be taken without delay, more especially as the lease under which the Belfast Royal Hospital is held will terminate in a few years. A site in Glanavel-street has been suggested, and as there are two institutions already located there—the Ulster Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital, and the Ho-pital for Diseases of the Skin—it is believed they might form wings of the new hospital.

PARIS.

(From our Special Correspondent.)

THE last bulletin of the Academy of Medicine contains an elaborate report by M. Bouley on the case of hydrophobia which has attracted so much attention lately. The author comes to the conclusion that inasmuch as M. Denis-Dumont neglected to perform any inoculation experiments on dogs with the saliva of his patient, it is impossible to pronounce any opinion as to the nature of the malady, or to look upon