regard to surgical apparatus, the want of practical knowledge must be referred to inadequate instruction in the hospitals. The College Examining Board has done and is doing its duty towards the profession and the public; let the hospital-schools do theirs, even more thoroughly than at present. When a student is asked to measure a patient for a truss, the answer ought not to be, "I cannot; I have never been taught." The supreme importance of *personal* knowledge resides obviously in the personally responsible nature of the duties pertaining to the student medical practitioner.

F. J. G.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE HYDRATE OF CHLORAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I should hesitate to ask for a corner in your valuable journal at this important juncture in the history of our profession but for the real importance of arriving at definite conclusions respecting the safety and the efficiency of the doses of a remedy which seems to have no ordinary claim upon our consideration in the character of a hypnotic pure and simple. The very courteous criticism of my communication "on Hydrate of Chloral in Cancer," by Dr. Clarke, of South Molton, and the letter of Messrs. Howe, giving the experience of the Berlin doctors, show that farther experience is wanting to guide those who may be disposed to leave the old paths of morphia, &c., in favour of the chloral. In *The Practitioner* of the current month, Dr. Ogle, of St. George's Hospital, has a note, stating that he has used this drug for some time, and the dose he employs generally and satisfactorily is not more than twenty grains. Of course I don't want to argue in favour of any absolute quantity, as, with our knowledge of the *tot homines* principle, such restriction would be absurd; but I fancy that it may be conceded that age and the amount of suffering to be relieved should generally be taken into account in apportioning the requisite dose. Since the publication of my short report on this subject, I have had occasion to prescribe the chloral for a young lady aged twenty-two, having a painful mammary tumour which much disturbs her rest at night. Fifteen grains make her quickly drowsy, and she sleeps well till morning. A case of uterine cancer, relieved by ten grains three times a day, began to complain of pain again, and fifteen grains were prescribed. The effect was remarkable. She was, as reported by both house-surgeon and nurse, intoxicated by each dose, and of course it was reduced. In a case of cancer of the tongue made comfortable by ten grains three times a day, the patient caught severe cold and became restless at night. Twenty grains were ordered at bed-time. He complained of headache, and too great drowsiness, and upon reduction of the dose to fifteen grains, he was relieved of any unpleasant symptoms, and sleeps all night. In one case only, an old woman with advanced cancer of the breast and solid oedema of the arm, have I had occasion to exceed the twenty grains as a night draught. At first she was made perfectly comfortable with twenty grains, but now she is taking thirty-five grains most beneficially. You see, Sir, that I have no bias or reticence in the matter. I only want to secure that we shall not lose the great advantage which this drug seems to offer us by any possible mischances in its administration. If I might be allowed to make a suggestion for safety's sake, I would counsel that ten grains should be the primary dose, and then let it be increased if necessary, *secundum artem*. There is still the delicate question of the standard quality of the drug, which may have something to do with diversities of effects. Would it be within the powers of the Pharmaceutical Society to institute and enforce such a standard, that we may all be sure we are working with the same material?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Upper Berkeley-street, May, 1870.

WEEDEN COOKE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Perhaps you may think the following note on chloral of sufficient interest to print. At the Royal

Hospital for Incurables, Putney, there is a patient suffering from cancer. She was admitted at the end of last year, and for a long time I tried a number of drugs to ease her intense suffering—opium, morphia, and cannabis, but they all had but very transient effects, and were followed by derangement of stomach.

Seeing by a recent number of THE LANCET that Mr. Weeden Cooke recommends hydrate of chloral in ten-grain doses three times a day in such cases, I determined to make a trial of this drug. She accordingly took ten grains three times daily, beginning May 12th. The next day she was certainly better; she had had a good night, but the pain was not altogether gone; there was no sickness nor headache. She was directed to take a dose when in pain. To my great satisfaction she had to take only one or two doses; for from that time to this, she has had no return of pain. How long this may last I cannot say, but from this case and others in which I have employed chloral, I am led to hope much from this new addition to our list of remedies.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

THOMAS JAMES WOODHOUSE, M.D.

Ranelagh-lodge, Fulham, May 20th, 1870.

UNUSUAL COMPLICATION IN LITHOTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—While performing the lateral operation for lithotomy about a month ago, on a child six years old, I met with a difficulty which I have never read of in any of the works on the subject. On withdrawing the knife after having passed it along the grooved staff into the bladder, I introduced my finger in the usual manner, but no stone could be found in the bladder. During the movements of my finger in search of the stone, I felt something unusual near the second joint of my finger, and then found that the calculus, a small one, had slipped out of the bladder on the withdrawal of the knife, with the gush of urine, and was lying in the recto-vesical pouch, from which position I managed to hook it out with my finger, without using the forceps at all.

The patient has perfectly recovered in every way, although I suppose the opening into the bladder must have been unusually large.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Kettering, May 14th, 1870.

J. WINTER DRYLAND.

PARIS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

SMALL-POX IN PARIS.

THE epidemic of small-pox is still the engrossing medical topic in this city; and as the question is one of general interest, I have grouped under a few separate headings the main facts which have occurred here during the last fortnight in connexion with the reigning disease.

Present condition of the epidemic.—The number of deaths is still on the increase. Last week (ending Saturday, 28th ult.), the mortality amounted to 215, whilst the week before there were only 195 deaths. All the quarters of the town have been more or less severely visited; but those which have undergone the most cruel ravages are the 10th, 11th, 12th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th *arrondissements*—namely, the more densely and poorly populated districts. The disease does not confine its attacks to the poorer classes, however; the wealthier circles of the Parisian population have paid a large tribute to the mortality; and among those who are now suffering from the malady I may just mention the names of the Duke de Caumont-Laforce, and of Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, former ambassador to London. A few days ago one of the children of Prince Napoleon was hurried away to Mentone, as he presented symptoms which threatened an attack of the disease.

Incident at the Corps Législatif in connexion with the epidemic.—On Monday, the 30th ult., one of the deputies of Paris questioned the Ministry touching various features of the epidemic. M. Ferry pointed out the necessity of urgently calling the attention of the public to the utility of