versely at the end, is moveable, and can be adapted to a surface on a level with the body, or to a block of any height. In M'Intyre's it is fixed.

Sixth. The new apparatus is lighter, and more portable; and, lastly, it is much less expensive; which is, by no means, an unimportant advantage. Indeed, it is so much less expensive, that the practicability of all practitioners possessing so useful an apparatus is not in the least precluded.

In the part of this paper published last week, are the engravings, at page 84, representing the apparatus, as follows:—

Fig. 1, represents the apparatus for fractures of the leg; the screw, the space at the angle behind the knee, and for the heel, the sliding foot-board, and the moveable plate at the end, are shown in it.

Fig. 2, is a sketch of the apparatus and bandage as applied to a limb which had been fractured.*

21, Golden-square, Sept. 19, 1837.

SLOUGHING FROM VACCINATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—That vaccination has conferred great good upon mankind, none but the ignorant or inconsiderate can conscientiously deny. In endeavouring to extend or perpetuate that good, some evils are occasionally, not necessarily, incurred, which experience may teach us to avoid. I have seen four infants destroyed by sloughing, produced by vaccination (not performed by myself), three of these died within a few hours after I had seen them; the fourth lingered two months; the wound healed, but the child was subsequently affected with purpura hæmorrhagica, and, finally, with anasarca. One of the other three had been carried to the eccentric old gentleman who had operated upon it; he would not, however, even look at the arm, but merely exclaimed, "Pooh! pooh! go home, and put on a bread-and-water poultice." That child died on the following morning. Three of the four had been vaccinated with several punctures, a dozen or fifteen in each arm. A fifth child I had some difficulty in saving. The arm had not begun to slough, but it was hard, purple, and swollen,—affected with intense inflammation, dependant, apparently, on the large number of punctures it had received.

I have reason to believe that syphilitic disease may be communicated with the vaccine virus.

A popular notion exists that diseases of the skin are often induced by vaccination. I believe that irritability of the skin, and, consequently, a disposition to disease of the

skin, are frequently produced by it, but this is not to be considered as an evil; it is, indeed, an advantage, for morbid action is thus determined to the surface of the body, as the more susceptible, or, figuratively speaking, the more vulnerable texture.

Allow me to take this opportunity of repeating an inquiry which I proposed some years since, respecting the treatment of that peculiar and fatal disease of infants, which is especially characterised by the shrill stridulous inspiration, and suffocative spasm affecting the glottis. Would it be justifiable, in a hopeless case, hopeless if treated by ordinary measures, to make an opening into the trachea? If the life of the infant can be prolonged until it has cut twenty teeth, it will generally recover from the disease. I hope some one of your many intelligent correspondents will favour me with a reply. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY REES.

45, Finsbury-square, Oct. 5, 1837.

HEREDITARY MALFORMATIONS.— SUPERNUMERARY FINGERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—The following singular case may be found interesting to many of your readers, particularly to those who may be sceptic of the doctrine of hereditary malformations:—

Mrs. Welsh, a respectable female, now residing in the town of Gort, in Ireland, has six fingers on each hand. That which occupies the natural situation of the thumb resembles the index-finger; or, in other words, that what ought *to be a thumb*, is a finger of three phalanges, on the radial side of which is the sixth, or supernumerary, digit, precisely similar in size and shape to the little finger, so that instead of fourteen phalanges, and five metacarpal bones, there are eighteen phalanges, and six metacarpal bones. The two metacarpal bones on the radial side seem to be supported by corresponding articulatory surfaces of the os trapezium. Both hands are precisely similarly formed.

The peculiarity in this case, however, does not rest here: she has borne nine children, of which number three boys and one girl laboured under the same deformity, and one son had seven fingers on each hand; the seventh, however, being a mere fleshy appendage, arising from the base of the sixth, was removed soon after birth by operation.

Mrs. Welsh states that her mother told her that she assigned the cause of her unusual supply of fingers to her having received a *fright* whilst she was pregnant, from a man well known at that time in Gort by the name of Tom with the two thumbs. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. G. HORNE, M.D.

Caveley Barracks, Gort, Oct. 1837.

* Errata in the Number of last week:—

For case 13, page 85, read case 9.

For case 15, page 86, read case 11.