Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE LATE MR. PITTARD.

(NOTE FROM PROFESSOR OWEN.)

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I have learned, with deep regret, the decease, at Sydney, New South Wales, of Mr. Simon Rood Pittard, who in 1860 accepted the office of Curator of the Museum of Natural History at Sydney, and, relinquishing his practice in Wellclose-square, went out with his wife and eight children to that colony. Mr. Pittard gained by competition an anatomical studentship in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, and worked assiduously under the late Professor Quekett in the formation of the histological collection. He contributed several articles to Todd's "Cyclopædia of Anatomy," characterized by minute accuracy and originality of thought. Neither his bodily strength nor a strong bias for scientific research was suited to the labours of a practice chiefly amongst the humbler classes, with which difficulties Mr. Pittard manfully struggled during several years. The salary offered by the authorities at Sydney, and the prospect of favourably settling his children in the colony, decided Mr. Pittard to take the step which his untimely death has made disastrous to the numerous family wholly dependent on him.

Sir Daniel Cooper, of 20, Prince's-gardens, Knightsbridge, late Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, New South Wales, and at present in London, has kindly consented to join me in receiving and transmitting to Mrs. Pittard subscriptions which may be confided to us, and which those who knew the excellent personal qualities of her late husband, or which his more fortunate professional brethren, may be disposed to contribute towards the relief of the immediate pressing needs of the widow and children.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Sheen, October, 1861. RICHARD OWEN, F.R.S.

TREATMENT OF ANASARCA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There appeared in your journal of the 19th instant, a paper by Dr. Witt, "On Anasarca," written apparently for the purpose of introducing a new operation to the notice of the profession. The author of this paper evidently labours under the impression that to incise the skin for the relief of dropsical accumulations has never before entered the medical mind. This is certainly not the case, as many of your readers must be aware, for the operation is one of the oldest on record, and is described by Celsus, in his chapter "De Hydropicis," in these words: "Incidentum quoque est super totum, quatuor fere digitis, ex parte interiore, qua per aliquot dies frequens humor feratur."

This, moreover, is not an operation which has fallen into disuse, and so been forgotten. In proof of this I may mention that, during my stay in the Edinburgh Infirmary as resident physician, I on two occasions practised it for the relief of extreme dropsical distension, which would not yield to the less dangerous method of acupuncture.—I remain, Sir, yours &c.,

Leamington, Oct. 1861. T. A. CARTER, M.R.C.P.L.

STRANGULATED HERNIA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Some little time since a new method of reducing a rupture was shadowed forth in THE LANCET by Mr. Jessop,—namely, by elevating the patient's heels in such a position that the force of gravitation of the gut should be towards the head, such gravitation having a most beneficial effect in assisting the reduction during the necessary manipulation. According to the Autobiography of the late Earl of Dundonald (vol. i. p. 230), it appears that such a method is not by any means new, as it was in operation more than fifty years since. When, as Lord Cochrane, he was captain of the *Impérieuse*, his lordship states that he sent a man having a rupture to the naval hospital, but he was refused admittance "because everything had not been done for him to reduce the rupture on board his ship, as he had not been hung up by the heels in a rolling sea."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Regent-street, Oct. 1861. H. HODSON RUGG, M.R.C.S.

INVERSION OF THE UTERUS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I send you the following for insertion should you think it may interest any of your readers:—

A. C—, aged twenty-two years, a very healthy woman, was taken in labour with her first child at ten A.M. of the 10th inst. The pains continued severe until four P.M., when the child, which presented naturally, was born. Ten minutes after the birth of the child, the midwife (the woman's mother) took away the after-birth, which was "very tight," and with it came away something which, to use her own expression, "looked like a calf's liver." She at once sent for me. Not being in the way, my partner immediately went, and found on his arrival, about six o'clock, the woman had been dead nearly half an hour. On examination, it was found that the uterus, inverted, was protruding externally, and that the flooding had been very great, causing syncope. Previous to the removal of the placenta, the woman was quite comfortable, and there was no hæmorrhage.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Buckingham, Oct. 1861. ROBERT DEATH, M.R.C.S.

A FOREIGN BODY IN THE RECTUM.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The following case may, perhaps, be deemed worthy of insertion in your pages:—

Mr. E. M— informed me that on the night of the 9th inst. he was seized with a very acute, hot, burning pain in the bowels, to relieve which he attempted to pass a large cold iron bolt (nine inches and a half in length, and about two inches in circumference) up the rectum; in doing so, the bolt slipped from his hand, and passed entirely into the bowels. When I saw him on the 18th inst., he was free from pain; the pulse was regular; he did not complain of any uneasiness from the presence of the bolt, and the bowels had been acting regularly. I was at first very much inclined to doubt his statement; but on examining the abdomen I very readily detected one end of the bolt lying under the edge of the right lobe of the liver, and by means of a sound, I ascertained the other end was situate about four inches within the rectum. With the aid of a speculum and a pair of long forceps, I easily removed the bolt, and the man has not had an untoward symptom since.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Barking, Essex, Oct. 1861. F. M. DAVIDSON, L.R.C.P.

PARISIAN MEDICAL INTELLIGENCE.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

"Quousque tandem?" "How long, indeed," groans the *Gazette des Hôpitaux*, its patience exhausted and its finger on the pages of THE LANCET, "will English medical men continue to furnish such slovenly details of cases as these? and when, at length, will they learn to give such complete and scientific records of pathological conditions as may be satisfactory to their continental brethren?" The above is the sense of your contemporary's ejaculation; and I think I may affirm, without fear of contradiction, that if excellence in case-taking consist in elaborate verbosity and pointless minuteness, the perfection so ardently longed for is not likely ever to be attained on your side the Channel. The publication in one of your recent issues of sundry cases illustrating the possibility of reunion of parts completely dissevered from the body, has drawn down your contemporary's censure upon the whole British medical public; no exceptions are made, and your correspondent in consequence thinks himself entitled to his portion. MM. Nichols, Francis Mason, house-surgeon (sic) of King's College Hospital, MM. Horton, Cory, and Jones, have all related cases of reunion, but all have given incomplete accounts, and the two last-named gentlemen, "in order to avoid the reproach of tardy publication," have omitted to affix dates to their notes. Hence the aspersions. Nevertheless, short and incomplete as are these observations, the *Gazette*, with considerable condescension, does not hesitate to turn them to scientific account, and admits their competence to establish (all that they were intended to establish) that no opportunity of attempting reunion should be lost whenever such cases present themselves. Before leaving the subject, I would hint to the *Gazette* that the epithet of