ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL.

ADJUDICATION OF THE PRIZE IN MIDWIFERY.

WE have received the following statement relative to the judgment upon the prize of midwifery, in the above school, from a gentleman connected with the hospital:—

“Considerable interest has been excited among the pupils during the last few days, by a dispute which has arisen with respect to the midwifery prize. The pupils were requested, by notice, to meet Dr. Cape, the lecturer, in the theatre, on Friday week last, and accordingly a large number assembled. Dr. Cape addressed them, and from his statement I learned that his decision had been objected to as unfair by the candidate he had placed as second. The Doctor read a note he had received from this gentleman, demanding that the answers might be submitted to the judgment of any lecturer on midwifery in the kingdom. To this Dr. Cape replied, that he thought such a mode of decision would be an improvement on the present one, but that it would be unfair to the successful candidate that his own judgment, on this occasion, should be open to any appeal; that although the answers of the second may have shown more reading, they did not prove the same attendance on lectures. The point of the answer was a distinct refusal to comply with the demand for an inquiry into the fairness of his decision. This called forth a further correspondence, and the matter rested private until Friday, when Dr. Cape still persisted in his refusal, although he said he should not fear the appeal.

“As this subject is likely to be brought before the Board of Governors, I made inquiry as to the questions which were proposed to the candidates, and find them to be as follows:—

1. Describe the contents of the gravid uterus at the fourth month.
2. Give the causes of after pains.
3. The treatment of hæmorrhage after the expulsion of the placenta.
4. The treatment of phlegmasia dolens.
5. _____ milk fever.
6. _____ puerperal fever.
7. What aperients are proper in menorrhagia?—what in dysmenorrhœa?—what in chronic amenorrhœa?
8. Treatment of the first stage of carcinoma of the uterus.
9. Diagnosis of hydatids of the uterus, from pregnancy.
10. Mode of preventing the development of scrofula.
11. Difference between infantile remittent fever and tabes mesenterica.
12. Diagnosis and treatment of syphilis in children.

“I shall not stop here to inquire whether these questions are calculated to test the

knowledge of any man on the principles and practice of midwifery; the question is, whether any man who felt that he had made a just decision would not immediately adopt the proposal, to submit the answers to an unprejudiced and talented person, rather than allow his character to suffer from an imputation of dishonourable conduct. The refusal betrays a fear of exposure, and nothing else; for it could not be unfair to the successful candidate to have the decision in his favour confirmed, which it undoubtedly would be, if, as Dr. Cape asserted, his answers were better in the proportion of 3 to 2. The Doctor will give no satisfaction in any way; he evidently fears an appeal; and I must say, that so obstinate a refusal of a reasonable request comes with peculiar ill grace from a man who, on a former occasion of a similar nature, was obliged to post a notice, that his honour, like that of Cæsar's wife, must not be suspected.”

POTASSA FUSA IN STRICTURES OF THE URETHRA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—You will oblige me by inserting in the next week's LANCET my reply to Mr. Whately's letter, contained in your last Number of May 9th. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

R. WADE.

68, Dean-street, Soho,
May 11, 1840.

Mr. Whately accuses me of having, in my observations on the Treatment of Strictures of the Urethra, lately brought forward at the Westminster Medical Society, “omitted to mention the name of his late father, who was the first who proposed and applied the caustic potash to strictures of the urethra, and published a work upon the subject;” also, of wishing it to be inferred, “that I was the original introducer of that remedy, and that it was a new and original application in my hands.”

That my paper on the treatment of strictures of the urethra was entirely free from the injustice and dishonesty with which Mr. Whately charges me, I can confidently appeal to your reporter, as well as to the other members of the Westminster Medical Society who were present when it was read. In that paper, before, in any way, alluding to my own views upon the subject, I not only stated, that to the late Mr. Whately was undoubtedly due the very great merit of having been the first who proposed and applied the potassa fusa to strictures of the urethra; but, also, minutely described the mode of its application recommended by that gentleman, as well as the particular cases in which he used it.

In justice to myself I must, however, ob-

serve, that my views differ very materially from those of Mr. Whately, as to the kinds of strictures in which the potassa fusa proves most valuable; the quantities that may be safely and advantageously employed; as well as the periods of its application.

EPIZOOTIC IN CATTLE.

MR. MORTON, of the Veterinary College, has been paying much attention to this remarkable and destructive disease, and has observed much analogy between it and the severe forms of eczema impetiginodes which attack the human being. If, he observes, this analogy should be truly proved to exist by subsequent and more careful researches, the epizootic must be considered as an exceedingly virulent form of eczema, attended with much constitutional disturbance, and involving ultimately the mucous membranes.

Mr. Symonds, of Twickenham, is pursuing the history and pathology of the disease with great ardour. He has made several interesting experiments upon its contagious powers, which he promises to embody in a treatise on the epizootic disease, which is preparing for the press.

Mr. Dalrymple, of Holles-street, Cavendish-square, has made a careful microscopic examination of the blood taken from one of the mammary veins of a cow, which was killed in consequence of the severity of her disease rendering all prospect of recovery hopeless. He could detect no pus globules, nor any abnormal appearance, in the milk, which separated immediately on being taken from the animal into an excessively offensive bloody serum, and a grumous fatty and albuminous matter; he found pus globules and altered mucus corpuscles in abundance.

—SUB-ED. L.

A SUCCESSOR FOR MORISON.

To the Editor :—Surely the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes should also allow the name of the following animal to be emblazoned with the same care and patronage as that of another quack, who informs us that they “have been pleased to allow him to have *his* name engraved on the *Government Stamp* in white letters on a BLACK ground.” Israel Ferment, an old man, well known to the public as a witness against the Chartists in the Newport affair, has since the trial been residing at Bristol. At Newport he obtained a living as an astrologer and quack; the quack part of his trade he is now practising in Bristol, as will appear by the following notice, which is highly creditable to the English character:—“TO THE PUBLIC.—Mr. Israel Ferment engages to cure king’s evil, cancers, asthmas, ulcerated sore legs, gravel in the kidneys,

and sore eyes, if the candle is not gone out; and cramp in the bones; he also draws pain from the head, without leeching, cupping, or blistering. If the lines are not too much decayed, he will tell their complaint, because he is a worm doctor, residing in Greyhound-court, Lewinsmeade, Bristol.”
May 2, 1840.

DIGESTIVE ORGANS OF INFUSORIA.

AFTER careful microscopical observations of the digestive organs of infusoria, M. Meyen has arrived at the conclusion that the rounded bodies seen in these animals, particularly after the ingestion of coloured food, are not coecal pouches, or stomachs continuous with the alimentary canal, as described by Ehrenberg, and believed by many able physiologists; but that they are isolated globules of ingested substance, moving freely in the abdominal cavity, and unrestrained by membranous parietes. These globular bodies were first noticed by Gleichen in 1781, after feeding infusoria with indigo and carmine, when he observed that the particles of each substance formed in a very short time globular masses in the interior of the animals. Ehrenberg thought he could trace a flexuous intestine along the course of these globules, which he has delineated in his splendid work. More recent observers have failed in their search for this intestine, but have seen the globules changing their position, and sometimes making a complete revolution along the internal parietes of the animal. M. Meyen explains their formation in the following manner. He says, that the particles attracted towards the buccal orifice by the action of cilia, are conveyed along the oesophagus to the stomach, where they are collected into a globular ball, and surrounded by a mucous secretion; that the stomach opens abruptly into the abdominal cavity without an intestinal prolongation, and into this cavity the balls are protruded, being connected with each other by the mucosity surrounding each successive globule; that when the abdominal cavity is filled with these balls, they are expelled through the anal orifice. The sacs which are seen in other infusoria are not, according to M. Meyen, stomachs, but coecal cavities containing fluid, varying in size, appearing or disappearing under the eye of the observer, and having no communication with the exterior. They resemble cavities which are formed in the mucus of true cellular plants, particularly aquatic cryptogamia. If these views of M. Meyen should be verified by other investigators, and be found correct, the term *polygastrica* as applied to the class of infusory animalcules, will require alteration.—*Abridged from the Edin. New Phil. Jour.*