lege, by the way, how *pleræque radices* are to be found *antequam caules aut folia exserant*. It is now the season for gathering the root of taraxacum, it being now in possession of its maximum of juices, which juices, obtained by expression, and inspissated by spontaneous evaporation in shallow earthen dishes, will form an extract of decided medicinal properties, and will be found to be a very valuable remedial agent, in various forms of dyspepsia, in doses of from five to ten grains three times a day. I do not believe it has any direct influence on the liver, but by its relieving gastric and intestinal irritation, will frequently do more for cases termed bilious, than calomel and other active medicines. I have frequently seen the most happy results follow the use of taraxacum alone, in cases which have been tormented by mercury and other heroic remedies, which have superinduced a degree of irritation more serious than the original disease itself. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOSEPH HOULTON.

87, Lisson-grove, July 20, 1838.

SMALL-POX IN UTERO.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—IN THE LANCET for 20th January, 1838, there is an account of a case with remarks, which was read by Mr. Streeter, at the Westminster Medical Society, on the effects of modified small-pox upon the foetus in utero. He stated in this paper that one case only of this disease, under these circumstances, had occurred in his practice, and that he had only heard of three other cases. As a record of facts respecting this point in the disease, by practitioners, might ultimately tend to determine the law by which its effects on the foetus are regulated, I have sent you the following case, which you will oblige me by inserting in THE LANCET. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM DAVIDSON, M.D.

71, West Nile-street, Glasgow,
29th June, 1838.

CASE:—A married lady, æt. 21, of healthy constitution, vaccinated when an infant, having a regular cicatrix on her arm, and in the eighth month of her first pregnancy, was seized on 9th Dec., 1837, with pyrexial symptoms, cough, and urgent difficulty of breathing, attended with pain in the chest. She was bled from the arm and blistered on the chest, with decided relief to the pain and difficulty of breathing, the blood being buffy; but complete relief was not obtained until the eruption of small-pox made its appearance on the 12th; after which the pulse gradually subsided to its natural

standard, and there was scarcely any increased quickness of it during the maturation of the pustules. The eruption was slightly confluent on the face, but perfectly distinct, though copious, over the rest of the body. It began to decline about the eighth day, and she soon recovered her usual good health; felt the movements of the foetus as before, and no pits or marks were left on the face or any other part of her body. During the course of the disease, in addition to the treatment already mentioned, she had castor oil or occasionally and small doses of tartrate of antimony. After the usual period of utero-gestation was completed, and after an ordinary labour, she was delivered of a son on the 18th January following, who though small and somewhat emaciated, seemed to labour under no disease, and there were no marks of any kind on his body; or, indeed, any other appearance, which could induce the supposition that he had laboured under small-pox.

He was vaccinated when about two weeks old, but without effect; this was repeated three times at intervals with dry matter, but with the same result. It was again done with fluid matter, but still without effect; but it was at last performed successfully on the 18th of this month, and three very regular and beautiful vesicles, containing very transparent lymph, were produced, which were after the 8th day surrounded by the usual areola. It may, perhaps, be supposed by some persons that the difficulty of succeeding in the vaccination of this case arose from the child having been affected with the virus of small-pox while in utero; but it is much more probable that the repeated failures were owing to the necessity of attempting it when he was so young and possessed of so little plumpness or vigour in the system; for the same want of success frequently occurs in ordinary cases under similar circumstances of body, or if the skin be harsh and dry.

HYDATIDS OF THE HEART.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—In the last number of Dr. Copland's valuable Medical Dictionary, at page 218, he treats of "watery cysts and hydatids" found attached to, or within, the substance of the human heart. He considers that the former are not unfrequent, but he thinks that the presumed hydatids mentioned by continental writers, are mostly mistakes, being watery cysts merely. There is, however, a case by Trotter, and published in his "Chemical and Medical Essays," in 1796, which looks more like the truth, but respecting even the correctness of this, the Doctor throws considerable doubt. Indeed, although he does not venture to deny that