Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

COLOUR-BLINDNESS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your issue of July 3rd, Dr. Joy Jeffries gives reasons for doubting the accuracy of my views as to the prevalence of colour-blindness. It is true that my examinations bear but an infinitesimal proportion in number to those of Dr. Jeffries, and that they have been made solely upon candidates for employment on the London and North-Western Railway. In the paper which he criticises I stated that one colour-blind was found amongst two hundred men consecutively examined by twenty-two coloured cards, aided by Stilling's coloured letters and squares. The discovery of so small a number, if colour-blindness be really so much more common, must have been due either to the insufficiency of the test, or to the fact that men with a knowledge of their own colour-blindness refrained from presenting themselves for examination and employment. This appears to me the more reasonable explanation, for I do not doubt the adequacy of the test, especially as the method of using it was precisely that on which Professor Holmgren lays stress—that, avoiding all names, the hand shall, by watching the colours, bear witness of the impression which the colours are making on the eye. That three-quarters of an hour were spent over one man is no evidence that the test is imperfect; nor do I gather from Professor Holmgren's writings that, even with his test—by far the best which has been yet devised—both time and patience are not occasionally required for the elucidation of the particular kind of colour-blindness, although the defective sense of colour may have been revealed almost as soon as the test has been begun.

The point of difference, however, between those who hold that every twentieth or twenty-fifth man is colour-blind, and those who find a difficulty in believing that this defect is so common, is a small one in comparison with the importance of a due recognition of colour-blindness in the examination of those who seek employment either by land or sea, where colours are the necessary signals of danger or otherwise.

The proposal to hold an examination at Cambridge has received the favourable consideration of the Executive, and it is hoped that no obstacles will arise in the way of carrying it out. An examination thus conducted must be of considerable value in arriving at an estimate of the prevalence of colour-blindness amongst an educated section of the community, and be the means of drawing greater attention to the subject than it has hitherto received in this country.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
New Cavendish-street, July 19th, 1880. HERBERT W. PAGE.

CHIAN TURPENTINE IN CANCER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—On March 29th last I commenced the treatment of an ulcerated cancer of the breast with Chian turpentine in solution, the drug I used corresponding closely with Professor Clay's description of the pure kind.

After about twenty doses the patient was relieved from the lancinating pains which she had endured for many months, and these have not returned, though she sometimes complains of aching about the lower margin of the sore. The discharge, at first very profuse, is much diminished. When the case came into my hands, March 28th, the infiltration was threatening the axillary glands, but it certainly has been arrested in that direction, for they are perfectly free from disease, and the lines of tenderness and hardness which could be traced towards the axilla are no longer perceptible. The ulcer is considerably smaller than it was; the cancerous mass appears to be disintegrating and sloughing out from the centre, while along the upper border there is a firm cicatrix. The general health is decidedly improved, and the patient usually sleeps well. The only external applications have been Condy's fluid or sanitas, with occasionally a little tincture of opium to allay superficial smarting.

I should not have sought to publish this case at present, as it is too incomplete to justify any very definite conclu-

sions, but I think there would be cause for regret if the instances of failure recorded in THE LANCET should dishearten any who are trying a remedy with which Professor Clay has achieved such gratifying results, and I therefore offer my experience, as far as it goes, hoping that it may be accepted for as much as it is worth in support of a prolonged and thorough test.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

JOHN GILL, M.D.,
Surgeon to the Infirmary, Stratford-on-Avon.

June 29th, 1880.

THE DISPUTE AT GUY'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—A writer in *Fraser's Magazine* has given to the public some valuable hints as to the causes of the existing state of things at Guy's. My object now is, while agreeing with him on the whole, to point out that, while mistaken in one case at least, he has also overlooked one strong argument against the system which it is now endeavoured to force upon the medical staff at Guy's. As an old student of King's, I look back with pleasure and satisfaction to the relationship which then existed between the medical and the nursing staffs. I hold that in a small hospital with a relatively large number of students a nursing sisterhood such as that of St. John's House is invaluable, both to protect the patients and help to maintain discipline.

On the other hand, in large hospitals such as Guy's, where students are sent that they may have practically the run of the wards, such a system would be both useless and injurious.

If women nurses are to be educated in strapping, dressing, bandaging, &c., as the writer in *Fraser* says is expected, let us all understand this, and room may no doubt be found for both nurses and students; but Guy's has not hitherto been used for such a purpose. I trust it never will be, for I now come to an important omission in the article already mentioned—viz., if a number of imperfectly (I put this mildly) educated women are to be allowed to practise upon hospital patients without either theoretical knowledge or even a determination to follow their so-called education to its legitimate end, what will be the result? I reply a large accession to the ranks of female quacks. Some of your readers, Sir, will laugh at this; but if so, they know not Manchester and similar manufacturing towns. Female quacks of all sorts and specialties abound here, and these have in the majority of cases been hospital nurses of the kind described, or at least mentioned above.

In conclusion, is it not time that the medical and surgical staff of other hospitals should express their opinion upon this matter? I venture to hope that neither my old teachers, fellow students, nor lady sisters would accuse me of any discourtesy to ladies, least of all to those who give their time, and often their money, to soothe the sufferings of the sick poor; but it is simply monstrous that one man should be permitted even to attempt to force a nursing system on the medical staff of Guy's against its will.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
Manchester, July 13th, 1880. H. STANLEY GALE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—With reference to the letter from Guy's students to Mr. Brudenell Carter, which you kindly inserted in your issue of July 10th, will you allow me a line to state that it was signed by all the full surgeons, dressers, and by all the clinical assistants, in addition to the eight residents whose names you published. This will, I think, show that the sentiments expressed in the letter are felt by men throughout Guy's.—Your obedient servant,

W. HALE WHITE, M.B. Lond.
Guy's Hospital, July 14th, 1880.

THE CASE OF SALEWSKAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In reference to the case of Salewskal you say, "on the whole this is the prettiest sample of crowner's quest law which we have encountered for many a long day." Allow me to add, that you are not alone in your opinion. Apart from the grounds on which you base the above statement, I hold that the ruling of the coroner was incorrect, and indeed illegal. The verdict was "wilful