from such changes in the animal economy : The increase or diminution of fibrine, absolutely or relatively, as respects the quantity of red corpuscles, or the modifications of nutrition depending thereon, for instance. Such subjects could not at present be advantageously treated of, either in a review or in reply to a review. Nor have I attempted to solve the question, To what extent, and in what manner, do azotised matters received into the blood, but not assimilated, modify the products of the metamorphoses of the azotised tissues? I have confined myself simply to the business of giving an answer to what I believe to be a misrepresentation of the true import of Liebig's text, and to arguments against his doctrine which I know to be fallacious. Your obedient servant,

HENRY ANCELL.

April, 1843.

DENTAL ABSCESS.—FASTENING

To the Editor.—Sir: I feel indebted to Mr. Castle, of New York, for his account of the treatment that he recommends for the cure of abscess in the tooth. That gentleman, however, should have remembered that I did not offer my method as a *cure*, but, at the best, only as a palliative; and the circumstance of my stating a case which had been successful for about two years, seems entirely to have escaped his notice. The discussion of this subject, however, having been the means of bringing forward a *cure*, I would solicit your attention to another point. Mr. Castle, as an objection to my method, remarks, that the danger of meddling with the neck of a tooth, in any way, is amply shown by "the serious injury done to sound teeth, where clasps, wires, or ligatures, are applied around their necks, to secure artificial teeth, the baneful practice of some dentists." Although the mechanical part of the dental profession has been brought to a very high state of perfection, still, Sir, I have yet to learn a plan by which artificial teeth can be supplied without recourse to the means of attaching them to others, when there are any remaining (I allude to the *generality* of cases). That such can be avoided is commonly asserted by advertisers, but these very men, in most cases, having but little knowledge of their profession, eventually use them, to the detriment of the other teeth. If the clasp be properly adjusted to the adjoining teeth, and its pressure be equally applied upon that part of the surface which it covers, it will *not* be injurious. This assertion of Mr. Castle not being attributable to the same motive as our London professors, and Mr. C. having shown his wish to disseminate information, he would, I am sure, confer a favour upon the profession generally, if he favoured us with an explanation

of his system of accomplishing this desideratum in London practice. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL GHRIMES, Dentist.
Baker-street, March, 29, 1843.

DIAGNOSIS BY THE PULSE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The number of the pulse in one minute is generally a multiple of twelve; I believe that this fact has not hitherto been noticed; yet will it be found not less useful and important than curious. In extensive practice, when advice gratis necessitates rapid conclusions, it is easy to determine, in a few seconds, to which number the pulse may be referred, and in many cases the nature and intensity of a disease may be suspected from the number of the pulse alone. In accordance with this law of numbers we meet with pulses of 60, 72, 84, 96, 108, 120, 144, 168. I have recently prescribed for a lady who has twice suffered from excessive nervous irritability; her pulse I clearly ascertained to be 240, twenty times twelve, nor was there any difficulty, as some have asserted there must be, in accurately counting it.

A pulse of 144 and 168 is often met with in pneumonia in children; it is remarkable that a pulse characteristic of a special disease will be the same in number in individuals of widely different ages. The pulse in rising and falling from accidental and temporary excitement, rises and falls through a series of duodecimal degrees; when within the first few minutes of an interview the pulse of a patient rapidly subsides from 120 to 108, 96, 84, a knowledge is at once afforded of the highly excitable and therefore susceptible constitution of the patient: beware of treating such subjects during periods of excitement, as for acute or serious disease, by violent measures; many such individuals are destroyed by continual cupping and bleeding, and mercurialising, for alleged determination of blood to the head; inflammation of the spinal marrow; inflammation of the lungs; pleurisy; disease of the heart, &c., when a recovery is often easily effected by merely allaying nervous irritability.

The pulse in many chronic diseases, as in consumption, is generally 108, and, under moderate excitement, 120, but not unfrequently only 96; a pulse not slower than 96 in an adult should always excite suspicion. It sometimes happens that in bulky, leucophlegmatic, or hydroæmic, phthisical subjects, having, too, a finely-developed chest, that the pulse does not rise above 72 or 84; the practitioner, misled by first appearances, is apt to cheer the patient with an assurance of certain recovery, but from the continuance of the cough, after one or two visits, is induced, almost carelessly, to auscultate the chest, and is dismayed at discovering a con-