

bark, in the form in which it has been described by Professor Liebig. Of this substance I have stated, and again repeat, that it "is not that which it purports to be, or that which Liebig has described and recommended, but is a very impure mixed product, little better than the rough quinoidine from which it is made." I may now add the following description of it, in which I shall borrow the graphic language of the patentee:—It is the product of, probably, "many organic substances, which having been subjected to various processes and influences, have undergone various transformations or changes."—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Montague-st. Russell-sq., Aug. 1846.

T. REDWOOD.

### DISTRIBUTION OF PRIZES AT WESTMINSTER HOSPITAL.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—A statement appeared in *THE LANCET* of last week that the annual distribution of prizes had this year been withheld at the School. On behalf of the lecturers and myself, I beg most emphatically to deny the truth of this assertion, and to express a hope that you will give publicity to this contradiction. Nine volumes of books; a case of obstetrical instruments; and a blowpipe case, complete, for mineralogical and geological analysis, were distributed among the following gentlemen:—Mr. Collins, Mr. Mullins, Mr. Tapson, Mr. Wales, Mr. Price.

In two of the classes, the answers of the candidates were not deemed by the examiners of sufficient merit to deserve a prize. No sum of 20*l.* was ever subscribed by the lecturers, as asserted in your journal; for the sum of money expended in prizes depends in each year on the qualifications of the candidates. The lecturers of the Westminster Hospital School of Medicine will never complain of, or flinch from, fair and honest criticism of their duty towards students whenever it is neglected; but on this occasion they fearlessly assert that the Editor of *THE LANCET* has been imposed on by false information, and they trust it will only be considered an act of justice to them to afford publicity to this contradiction of complaints that have no real foundation.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. R. BASHAM,

Physician to the Westminster Hospital,  
Westminster Hospital, Aug. 1846. and Hon. Sec. to the School.

### WESTMINSTER MEDICAL SCHOOL.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Your having called attention, in your valuable journal, to the wretched state of affairs at this unfortunate School, has been most satisfactory and serviceable to the pupils, and will, doubtless, be of inestimable advantage to those who may be looking for a place of instruction in the ensuing session. That offence should be taken by the melancholy officials whom Dr. Hunter has left behind, might reasonably be expected, but it hardly seemed credible that any one should seriously stand forward as a champion of the abuses you have so justly exposed. Such, however, is the fact. Dr. Basham, one of the lecturers, has, it appears, been cajoled into taking upon himself this unenviable task; his first essay having appeared in print last week. Fortunately, however, so great is the regard for truth in *THE LANCET*, that the only remarks made in it upon this subject, since the close of the winter session, can be verified to the most unwilling comprehension. The facts, as they have occurred, are these:—In *THE LANCET* of the 4th of July, it was stated that Dr. Hunter had retired from this School, and that the remaining lecturers had decided that no new professor should be appointed in his place, but that they would struggle on through the next session without one. This fact the prospectus of the School, just published by Dr. Basham himself, as honorary secretary, fully corroborates; Dr. Hunter's assistants, Messrs. Erichsen and Pennell, being the only names announced as lecturers in his chair, unless the tooth-drawer, a last year's pupil, is to be facetiously dubbed a Professor of Anatomy. The second notice, in *THE LANCET* of August the 15th, in responding to the appeal of the indignant pupils, briefly alluded to the mountebank performance in the distribution of prizes at the close of the winter session, but avoided dwelling upon the paltry manœuvres so justly denominated shabby by the pupils. Dr. Basham, however, emphatically declares, that we have no just grounds of complaint, but ought, like honest Sancho, "to be thankful; bid God bless the giver, nor look a gift horse in the mouth." Let us ask Dr. Basham the following questions:—Is it no cause for complaint that the annual public meeting of the lecturers for

the distribution of prizes should have been suppressed? Is it no cause for complaint that the students should never have been publicly called together, to receive, in the presence of their friends and teachers, the prizes promised to them? but that, instead of the open, straightforward, and honest proceeding adopted at every other School, they should be shuffled off with a private visit from Dr. Bird, the lecturer on midwifery at the School itself, to deliver a single work on the practice of medicine, already alluded to by your correspondent in last week's number. Have we no cause of complaint against Dr. Basham himself, that the other winter prize, the trumpety blowpipe and scales, should have been withheld from April till the end of June, and then, instead of being publicly presented, should have been privately awarded by him in the apothecary's shop at the adjoining hospital? And further, have we no cause of complaint that the three most important classes, anatomy, surgery, and materia medica, should receive no reward, but that the students who went in for examination should be told, in Dr. Basham's cool style, "that their answers were not deemed of sufficient merit to deserve prizes at all?" And lastly, have we no cause of complaint that Dr. Basham should publicly represent, as rewards distributed to the classes of the winter session, three prizes, which Dr. Bird and himself only promised to give away within the last few days to their three summer pupils, some of whom never attended the winter classes at all? Surely Dr. Basham cannot seriously rely upon subterfuges so unworthy as these.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

August, 1846.

A PUPIL OF THE SCHOOL.

P.S.—I beg to enclose my address.

### DEGLUTITION EXCITED BY DASHING COLD WATER ON THE FACE.

(NOTE ADDRESSED TO DR. MARSHALL HALL.)

MY DEAR SIR,—You will remember my communication to you, in which I described a novel mode of making patients swallow, which you deemed worthy of publication in *THE LANCET*, (December, 1842, page 437,) and, afterwards, in the appendix to your new *Memoirs*, 1843, which I had the honour of illustrating.

On Monday last, the 3rd instant, a further most felicitous illustration of that action occurred to me. A poor creature, who had attempted self-destruction by cutting his throat, was rapidly sinking from loss of blood. His pulse could not be felt, and his heart scarcely; the respiration also was exceedingly slow and feeble. It was desirable to administer stimulants, and his mouth was accordingly filled with spirits and water. But the patient was unconscious, and therefore did not swallow. Cold water was dashed in his face for the purpose of making him swallow, when the contents of the mouth were instantly gulped down. The effect of the stimulant was soon evinced by the state of the circulation. By this application, then, of your discovery, we not only have the means of provoking respiration in the half-asphyxiated, but also of administering stimulants at a moment of vital importance, by exciting deglutition.—Most truly yours,

Stamford, August, 1846.

CHARLES SIMPSON.

### OBITUARY.

THE death of JAMES MARSH, of Woolwich, on the 21st of June, at the age of fifty-two, has been already noticed in this journal. He was a man advantageously known in the scientific world, and acquired a far-famed reputation by his tests for arsenic. He was born the 1st of September, 1794, at Woolwich, in Kent. He early displayed great taste for literature, and was engaged in the Royal Arsenal, at Woolwich, from his early years up to his death. In 1815, he married, at Erith, in Kent, Mary Watkins, who, with two daughters, now deplores his demise: from that period he pursued the study of chemistry with great zeal and success. In 1823, it was for his electro-magnetic apparatus that the Society of Arts awarded to him the large silver medal and thirty guineas, which were presented by the late Duke of Sussex. In 1836, he communicated his ingenious test for detecting minute quantities of arsenic, for which the large gold medal of the Society of Arts was presented to him by Admiral Codrington. In 1837, he received the large silver medal from the Society of Arts, presented by the Duke of Sutherland, and also thirty pounds from the Honourable Board of Ordnance, for his invention of percussion tubes for cannon. In 1844, by an order from the Admiralty, the latter was directed to be used