

speak to the state of the os uteri in February. We rejoice to have this assurance that Dr. Lee did then manifest so much feeling on the matter, and deeply regret that during his examination in court no traces of it were discoverable; but for Dr. Ramsbotham, we affirm that his explanation adds additional weight to that which we are disposed to regard as a very serious omission, if not a grave error of judgment. We have heard witnesses, when they had given evidence, address the Court in language somewhat similar to that which Dr. Ramsbotham, according to his own admission, might have employed when speaking of the result of his examination. How differently would he now stand with his brethren had he added, "That the appearance then presented was not irreconcilable with a condition which might, according to the circumstances at the time, have rendered requisite the treatment adopted." Such an avowal must, on this as it has done on similar occasions, have elicited the approval of both the judge and the jury. We feel that its recollection would have been a source of congratulation to Dr. Ramsbotham; and we know it would have contributed much to maintain the value of medical testimony as well as the honour of the profession.—ED. L.

## MR. ADAMS AND MR. PROPERT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I beg to forward to you a correspondence which has recently taken place between myself and Mr. Propert, and upon which it is unnecessary for me to make any comment.

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

WM. ADAMS, F.R.C.S.

5, Henrietta-street, Cavendish-square, April 22nd, 1863.

5, Henrietta-street, Cavendish-square, April 15th, 1863.

SIR,—The following quotation is from a letter received from a gentleman occupying a high position in our profession:—

"The sting of the matter is that, spite of the late trial, and notwithstanding the evidence since afforded by Dr. Cottew, Mr. Maitland, Dr. Webb, Mr. Toynbee, and others as to the antecedents of the prosecutor, there are some persons who still adhere to Mr. Propert—who justify him in his apparently harsh treatment of you at the beginning of the affair, when he condemned you unheard, and refused to listen to the explanations you offered him, and who not merely condemn you by implication, but affirm positively as follows—viz., that were Mr. Propert's version of his proceedings made public, he would be said to be entirely justified, and that he is displaying great forbearance towards you in not noticing the attacks made upon him; and that his holding his tongue is safety to you. These latter expressions I have heard this week from the mouth of a personal friend of mine—a man of sense, and one whose opinion I value. He is a friend of Mr. Propert's, and as such believes that Mr. Propert's statement would crush you."

I wish to know whether the statement made in the above quotation be true or false.

Is it, or is it not, true that you are dealing out such insinuations,—or any insinuation whatever against my character?

I must demand a plain and simple answer to this question, and without delay.

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

John Propert, Esq.

WM. ADAMS.

6, New Cavendish-street, W., April 17th, 1863.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 15th inst., I beg to state that I never heard of the statements alleged to have been made by friends of mine with reference to yourself in your letter referred to, neither do I consider myself in any way responsible for the opinions they may entertain respecting you. I have, however, always felt much regret that a gentleman of your position in our profession should not have availed himself of the proposal by Mr. Johnson, the attorney acting for Miss Russell in the action brought by that person against you, contained in a letter addressed to your attorney dated March 22nd, 1862—namely, "That both the plaintiff and defendant should be examined as witnesses on the trial of that action;" and that such proposal should have been declined by your attorneys in their letter to Mr. Johnson in reply of the 11th of April, 1862.

I remain, Sir, yours &c.,

William Adams, Esq., &c. &c.

JOHN PROPERT.

5, Henrietta-street, Cavendish-square.

SIR,—In my letter of the 15th inst. I asked you a plain

question to this effect:—Is it, or is it not true, (1) that you have said you were forbearing towards me by not replying to explanations which have been demanded from you for your conduct towards me; (2) that holding your tongue is safety to me; (3) have you implied that you are aware of allegations injurious to my character, which you withhold out of forbearance to me?

In your reply of the 17th April you do not answer this question; I must therefore repeat my demand for an answer.

You have introduced in your letter a subject totally irrelevant to my question; but I will remind you that however desirous I was to be examined as a witness—and it would undoubtedly have been much to my advantage—the laws of evidence did not permit of it. You might learn this from any solicitor; and if you will refer to the published charge of the Chief Baron, of which I send you a copy, at page 30 you may see that the Judge said, "Miss Russell cannot be examined; nor can Mr. Adams." Mr. Lush in his opening address explained this peculiarity in the law of evidence, and Mr. Serjeant Shee did not suggest that any other course could have been adopted. This, however, is a mere matter of legal procedure that has nothing whatever to do with the question to which, as a member of the same profession, I require a plain and truthful answer.

I am, Sir, yours &c.,

John Propert, Esq.

WM. ADAMS.

6, New Cavendish-street, April 22nd, 1863.

SIR,—Having in my letter of the 17th inst. answered the questions contained in your letter to me of the 15th inst., I have no reply to make to your letter of the 18th; and I must decline any further correspondence on the subject of your letters.

I beg to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. Adams, Esq.

JOHN PROPERT.

## THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The question as to the origin of species has now been agitated for many years, and it seems high time that something definite should be arrived at. The author of the "Vestiges of Creation," supported by Mr. Darwin and Prof. Huxley, hold the doctrine of Development—i.e., that the higher species have been developed from the inferior species. This theory I cannot agree to, as the want of all connecting links either in the existing races or the fossil remains of past ages seems to me to be fatal to it.

It is probable that vegetation appeared first on the face of the earth, and that animal life followed it so closely as to be almost simultaneous with it. But as this order of creation is not necessary to the theory I am about to describe, I will not insist on it, but pass immediately to the origin of the animal races.

I believe that every species now existing, or that ever has existed, has come originally from a germ or ovum. This ovum has been formed naturally or spontaneously when the circumstances coexisted which were fitted to call forth such creation. The ovum thus spontaneously produced by nature becomes first a worm or fleshy substance, and afterwards is developed into an animal fitted to reproduce itself.

We see a process of creation something analogous to this going on before our eyes in the case of insects. These creatures seem to be produced spontaneously, ova being formed on the ground or on the branches of trees or shrubs which readily take the form of grubs and caterpillars. These give birth to flies and butterflies, with heads, limbs, and organs as complete as in a bird or quadruped. Here there is no development such as that which makes a man go through all the stages of a worm, an insect, a fish, a fowl, and an ape, as contended for by the author of the "Vestiges." If it be said that there is no proof that these insects have not been generated by eggs laid by a previous generation, I answer that the probability of such being the case is to all who have studied natural history a very small one.

Again, if I am asked where the original ovum gets its life, I answer that we know from observation that grubs, locusts, and other insects are often formed by myriads in a single night, which goes far to prove that life readily commences in nature where no life was before.

The actions of matter are endowed with an infinite variety of properties or laws, which are treated of by chemists under the general term of "polarization." These laws are brought into operation and developed by circumstances. Bring certain combinations together, and vegetable matter will be produced; and bring that vegetable matter into connexion with mineral matter, and animal life is produced.