

earnestly recommend you, gentlemen, to forward all the facts you can procure upon this subject, without loss of time, to Dr. Rumsey. I have put my hand to the plough, and I will not look back; but heedless of intimidation and slanders, I will still advocate the rights, honour, and interests, of my professional brethren. (*Applause.*)

Mr. Crosse read an extract from a letter he had received from one of the principal Commissioners, which stated that they (the Commissioners) had no desire to interfere with, or direct the contracts between, the parish authorities and their medical attendants.

The company were afterwards addressed by Dr. England (who warmly eulogized the efforts in Parliament of Mr. Warburton), and other gentlemen, and the party broke up about ten o'clock, highly gratified with the prospect of accomplishing the object which had brought them together.

SUICIDE BY THE ADDER.

To the Editor.—SIR,—An adder was captured by me and confined very loosely in the folds of a thin lawn handkerchief, so that I might observe its efforts to escape. The handkerchief was laid with the adder on a grass plot, and after several energetic but ineffectual attempts to free itself from bondage, the animal deliberately inflicted a bite on its own body, and quickly died. Such an act of suicide has been asserted of the scorpion, but I have never heard of the like circumstance in an adder, excepting on this occasion. The circumstance cannot be attributed to *instinct*, a principle which might assist it in its efforts to *escape*, but could never prompt so unnatural an act as that which produced *death*. Let this fact (witnessed by two others as well as myself) be added to the number of extraordinary events which foil the philosopher in his efforts to deny the existence of intellect, unquestionably bestowed in various modifications on the lower animals of the creation. I am, Sir, yours truly,

WILLIAM H. THOMAS.

Bristol, Sept. 16, 1835.

BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

LETTER FROM DR. CONOLLY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your remarks on the Anniversary Meeting and Dinner of the Birmingham School of Medicine, in *THE LANCET* of Sept. 12, it is stated that I proposed as a toast the "Theory and Practice of Medicine." This erroneous statement, origin-

ating with the reporter of the *Birmingham Gazette*, would be quite immaterial, but for the manner of its introduction in support of some not undeserved censure. I trust, however, you will permit me to say that I proposed no such toast. I was requested to acknowledge the honour done to myself and the other examiners; and having done so, it was my duty to name and propose the healths of the gentlemen to whom medals had that day been awarded. The only other toast which I proposed was the health of Mr. Cox, senior, the father of Mr. Sands Cox, to whose exertions the Birmingham School of Medicine is so greatly indebted.

Although it may add a little to the length of this communication, I cannot refrain from giving, on this occasion, my sincere testimony to the proficiency, as far as I had an opportunity of judging of it, of the students of the Birmingham School. I have occasionally thought that the apprehensions expressed by some of my seniors in the profession, that the education in provincial medical schools would be found superficial, were not unreasonable. But I am convinced that they are unfounded. The utmost care seems to be taken to make the students well informed in every branch of their profession. The two students who presented themselves as candidates for the medal in Dr. Eccles's class, that of medicine, were subjected to a *viva-voce* examination, about an hour and a half being devoted to each; and their answers were so satisfactory as to make it impossible for me to doubt that they had been well taught both in the lecture-room and in the hospital. A student's proficiency is, of course, only to be looked upon as an earnest of future diligence and usefulness; but, seeing the number of provincial schools now established, it is gratifying to believe that they will tend to increase the number of well-informed practitioners. My opportunities of forming an opinion, when in London, of the knowledge possessed by students from the schools of Manchester and Bristol, had previously inclined me to take this favourable view of the provincial institutions; and whoever looks at the rising provincial museums, must see that every year adds to their efficiency as places of instruction. I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

J. CONOLLY.

Warwick, Sept. 25, 1835.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

MEDICAL REFORM IN IRELAND.

WE have not yet received a copy of the work mentioned in the following letter, but, as a preliminary step to its introduction to the profession, we do not know that we can furnish a better announcement than