

no other way for the Naval Surgeon to acquire it, seeing that few or no calculi grew in the Navy.

A word or two as to the comparative infrequency of stone amongst seamen. It was stated, by the President of the Society, and confirmed by others, that five-sixths of the subjects of lithotomy in *St. Bartholomew's Hospital* were under the age of 12 years, or above the age of 45 or 50 years. As few or no boys enter the Navy under 12, and but few men remain there after 45 or 50, the comparative infrequency is a creature of the imagination. Soldiers, or peasants, between the above ages, would be found to present the same infrequency of calculus. Many men, however, have calculi in their bladder for years, without being aware of their condition; and therefore many men may have been invalided from both services who had renal calculi in their bladders, which afterwards grew to stones of formidable size, and demanding an operation. I was present at an operation for stone in Haslar Hospital, soon after the termination of the war; the subject was a gunner of one of the ships in ordinary, at Portsmouth. Had this man, when before the mast, and in war time, been presented for survey, he would have been invalided, for he would have objected to the operation at a Naval Hospital, for reasons already stated; and afterwards, in all probability, he would have submitted to the knife at a Civil Hospital. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES JOHNSON.

Suffolk-place, 2nd Jan., 1837.

PRECOCITY OF THE MAMMÆ IN AN INFANT.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—The following case, from the rarity of its occurrence, seems to me to possess some degree of interest. I therefore send you the statement for insertion in your valuable Journal.

Betty Marsden was delivered of a female child in the Preston workhouse, on the evening of the 6th of December, 1836. The labour was speedily terminated, in fact, before any medical man could arrive at the spot; and she rapidly recovered from her accouchement, without experiencing any untoward symptom. About one week after the birth of the child, she perceived some enlargement of its breasts, and asked my opinion as to what she should do with them. I advised her to leave them alone, but especially not to finger them unnecessarily. After the lapse of another week they were still further developed, but unaccompanied by any preternatural heat, swelling, or redness, or, indeed, any other symptom indicating inflammatory ac-

tion. They now seem stationary, and the child in every respect healthy, although not above the ordinary weight or size of an infant of the same age. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

W. HOWITT, M.R.C.S. and

One of the Surgeons of the Preston Dispensary.
Preston, Dec. 25, 1836.

POSITION OF THE PATIENT IN THE CURE OF VESICO-VAGINAL FISTULA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—IN THE LANCET of last Saturday, I observe a letter from a very juvenile member of our college, in reference to my case of fistula vesico-vaginalis,—stating that Dr. Ryan had anticipated me in regard to the position of the patient. I saw Dr. Ryan's Manual of Midwifery (1828) yesterday, at the library of the College, and find that his words, page 53, are as follows:—"The proper treatment of this disease, so far as the plug is concerned, was unknown ten years ago." Dr. Ryan is not the inventor of the tampon, or plug, nor does he say so; nor does he mention the position of the patient; neither (supposing he did) do I know of one single instance of a cure from the treatment similar to the case of Connor, substantiated by more evidence of unimpeachable authority than the mere assertion of the operator. Moreover, I have (among other matters unpublished) in this case, three letters in my possession, written by the woman Connor, stating that she went to Dr. Ryan, near Hatton-garden, who *examined her three times*, and finally told her, that "he could do her no good." I console myself with having *gratuitously* assisted and benefitted a poor helpless woman; and what should add a stimulus to young aspirants, "*exemplum didi, quamobrem ut feci quoque faciant.*" I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM BAXTER.

1, Queen Charlotte-row, New-road,
December 30, 1835.

EDINBURGH INFIRMARY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—Our winter session has commenced. The number of students does not appear to be diminished. At the Infirmary an amputation was got up to astonish the young folks, which eventually astonished the old ones. The operation was commenced by making a flap of *integument alone*, on the outer side of the limb; a second, a muscular one, was made internally, and a third, a square one, posteriorly. The bone was sawn *horizontally*, and, in consequence, snapped in the middle. The *femoral vein* was tied. The disease was stated to be "anchy-