

The necessity of such a work is the more evident, that the student has hitherto been compelled to derive his acquaintance with the species of medicinal plants, chiefly from works treating of the British Flora, or to rely upon authorities which are far from being "infallible." Thus, with respect to this latter point, Mr. Lindley acquaints us, in his preface, that one writer describes cubebs as being obtained from Sierra Leone, where the piper cubeba does not grow. Again, rhubarb has been said, by different writers, each having equal confidence in his opinion, to be derived from the root of *rheum palmatum*, *rheum undulatum*, and *rheum emodi*. Finally, it has been stated, upon competent authority, that of the few vegetable drugs admitted into the last edition of the Pharmacopœia of the College of Physicians, twelve are referred to plants which *certainly* do not produce them, while twenty-six others have been assigned to their sources with more or less inaccuracy.

The above, and many other examples, which we might enumerate, show how important it is that the investigation of medicinal plants should be taken up by some one fully qualified for the proper execution of so difficult a task. No one was better adapted to fulfil the object which he has professed than Mr. Lindley, and we feel confident that his work will obtain the patronage which it justly merits.

IMPERFORATE ANUS.

THE RECTUM TERMINATING IN THE BLADDER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have taken the liberty of transmitting to you the following case of imperforate anus, which has lately occurred under my observation, and which, from its rarity, may perhaps be sufficiently interesting to find a corner in your valuable Journal. I remain, Sir, your humble servant,

W. C. RANDOLPH.

Hungerford, Berks, Oct. 8, 1838.

Sept. 24, at 5 A.M., M. B. was delivered of a fine male child, which, upon examination, was found destitute of every appearance of an anus, nor was the skin between the scrotum and coccyx found to be elevated in the slightest degree, that, and the surrounding surface, being entirely on a level. In consequence of the mother's repugnance the operation commonly resorted to in these cases was not performed, the child being consequently left *ad naturæ curam*. In the after part of the day, after continued efforts

in straining, a small quantity of meconium was observed to pass off through the penis, which naturally led to the conclusion, that the rectum terminated in the bladder. The child refused the breast when offered, nor could be prevailed upon to take it until the following morning, after which it became frequently sick. He again, after great straining, passed off a very small portion of meconium, which he continued to do twice daily up to the day of death. In a few days the abdomen became swollen, tense, and painful, the contortions of the intestines being very plainly perceived. The child gradually wasted, and continued to do so until the 3rd of October, when, at 1 P.M., after receiving the breast (which it had not done previously for three days), he was seized with convulsions, which lasted several minutes. The child gradually revived, and continued, apparently, in great pain until the following morning, when, at 5 A.M., he was seized with a second fit of convulsions, in which he died.

Upon examination post-mortem, the whole of the smaller intestines, and the upper part of the colon, were found to be distended with flatus; the lower part of the latter, and the whole of the rectum with meconium. Upon tracing the rectum downwards, it was found to continue in its natural course as far as the bladder, into which it opened immediately under and posterior to the prostate gland, and by passing through a probe the opening was found to be nearly of the same dimensions as it would have been if natural.

THE LECTURES ON MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE AT ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—In the last No. of THE LANCET, it is correctly stated, that the present lecturers on medical jurisprudence at St. George's Hospital are Dr. Robert Lee and Mr. C. F. Macauley, a young barrister; but the additional statement, that,—“A medical gentleman was first suggested as the coadjutor of Dr. Lee, but he declined that gentleman's services on the ground of his being a *general practitioner*,” must, I think, be incorrect.

As I am the individual referred to in the above paragraph, permit me, in justice to Dr. Lee, from whom I have never received other than kind and gentlemanly treatment, to explain why it appears to me an impossibility that he should have been the raiser of the objection referred to.

In a conversation which passed between us, at Dr. Lee's own house, upon the subject of the vacant lectureship, Dr. L., mentioned that he had volunteered his own services, in conjunction with those of any other respectable person, as the future lecturer on medical jurisprudence, upon which I in-