

an eruption of irregular reddish patches, resembling measles. The throat becomes sore, vivid injection and great enlargement of the tonsils is observed, the temperature runs up as high as  $103.2^{\circ}$ , and the eruption in two or three days becomes confluent, and much resembles scarlet fever. It is followed by heavy desquamation, and in short, as Dr. Murchison remarks, there is a combination of scarlatinous angina and tongue, with morbillous catarrh. That this is a specific disease I fully admit, but if roseola again is different, and is merely an aberrant form of measles, its occasional throwing back to the parent stock suggests some analogy with varicella, whose origin may possibly be also due to an accidental splitting away from its major form of disease.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Brook-street.

ROBERT FARQUHARSON, M.D.

### "HOSPITAL MORTALITY."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I must ask for space to protest against your statement that "serious charges had been made by Mr. Tait against the administration of St. Thomas's Hospital." I have done nothing of the kind. The very worst I have said about that hospital is at page 123, in the following paragraph: "As to the results displayed by the returns of St. Thomas's Hospital, *unless they can be satisfactorily explained as being due to some inevitable and irremovable conditions*, I must say that I have grave doubts about the advantages gained by the populace of London from the palatial edifice on the Albert Embankment." I must ask your attention to the words here underlined; and I trust that, in justice to me, you will insert this my last letter on the subject, at least at present.—I am, &c.,

Birmingham, August 31st, 1877.

LAWSON TAIT.

\* \* \* This discussion has now reached a point at which it may be conveniently closed.—ED. L.

### "A POCKET INSULATED SURFACE THERMOMETER."

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—As the maker of Dr. Mortimer Granville's Pocket Insulated Surface Thermometer, I feel called upon to reply to two points raised by Dr. Dupré's letter in your issue of last week. The first is an implied want of accuracy on account of the tube being circular. In answer to this I would say I am prepared to guarantee the accuracy of each one turned out by me, and furthermore to furnish where required a *Kew verification*. The other point refers to this thermometer being a *non-registering* one. To this I would simply say that it was at Dr. Mortimer Granville's special request this was made without a register, as he attaches considerable importance to the results to be obtained from experiments now being made in taking the temperature and force of the breath, in which case it is obvious to everyone a register would be useless. Your kind insertion of this in your next issue will much oblige

Your very obedient servant,

H. STEWARD,

Optician.

Strand, September 4th, 1877.

### AN ETHER INHALER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Ormsby, of the Meath Hospital, Dublin, having asked me to try his "Ether Inhaler," made by Coxeter and Son, London, with some cases in the Netley Hospital, having first kindly allowed me to see the method of administration, I have had great pleasure in doing so, and now beg to offer my experience with his instrument in seventeen cases.

The shortest time taken to place a patient under the influence of ether with this inhaler was one minute forty seconds, and the longest ten minutes, the delay in the latter being entirely due to the want of attention to some details. The average time taken in the seventeen cases was four minutes ten seconds.

The average quantity of ether used was one ounce four

drachms, which included that expended during operative measures; one operation being that of ligature of the external iliac artery, which took nineteen minutes, and another excision of the elbow-joint, twenty-five minutes; both of these operations only required two ounces six drachms of ether. Mr. Ormsby's inhaler is simple in construction, and if properly adjusted acts more speedily, and with a smaller quantity of ether, than any I have seen or used.

Considering the risk of life attendant on the administration of chloroform, while that of ether is so very small, one cannot but feel that with such a safe and convenient means of mitigating the sufferings of man in surgical operations, a surgeon takes upon himself a grave responsibility when he uses chloroform as an anæsthetic in preference to ether (when a choice is available) unless circumstances did not admit of the latter being administered.

Yours truly,

J. H. PORTER,

Surgeon-Major, Assistant Professor of Military Surgery,  
Sept. 7th, 1877. Army Medical School.

### THE ASTLEY COOPER PRIZE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I entirely endorse all that "Justice" says in extenuation of the physicians and surgeons of Guy's Hospital up to the time of their discovery that the essay was a joint production (whether German or English matters not); but having made this discovery, I maintain that it does not redound to their credit that they persisted in the award. There can be no doubt that the proper course of proceeding would have been to have opened the envelope bearing the motto of the next best essay. Morally, at least, they were bound to do so.

"Justice" intimates that they were legally bound to pass over the joint production, and to award the prize to the "successful candidate." The legal obligation is, I fear, doubtful. With regard to the moral, and, as you express it, the professional obligation, I would fain hope that after your remarks, both last week and the week before, these gentlemen may be induced to review their decision. Whether they do so or not, I for one am not eager to appeal to "the glorious uncertainty of the law," feeling that, whatever the final decision may be, the position I take, by leaving the matter to their conscientious consideration as gentlemen and professional men of high standing, is higher than if I took part in a legal squabble.

Although I still feel that I am at present unfairly treated, there can be no doubt that in my case, as in the case of all other candidates, *labor ipse pretium*.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Sept. 3rd, 1877.

AN UNFAIRLY-TREATED CANDIDATE.

### BIRMINGHAM.

(From our own Correspondent.)

THE last quarterly sanitary report of Dr. Hill, the medical officer of health, shows that the death-rate has been considerably higher than in the corresponding spring quarter of the last four years, and has amounted to 25.06. The zymotic deaths were 361, and represent an annual death-rate of 3.8 per 1000 of the zymotic diseases: measles has been the most fatal, causing 126 deaths, and pertussis occupies the second position, with 103 deaths. There were only 19 reported cases of variola, all of which were described as vaccinated. Sixteen of these cases were removed to the Borough Hospital, and two proved fatal. Thirty-four samples of well-water were examined during the quarter, and the water from all being largely contaminated with sewage, steps were taken to close the wells. During the last few weeks the death-rate has continued very high. Last week it was 26.9, and the average of the past three weeks has been 25.9. This is due to the prevalence of diarrhoea, and the deaths have been chiefly in infants under one year, caused, as Dr. Hill suggests, by improper feeding and neglect on the part of mothers, arising from ignorance or indifference. It is to be hoped that by free popular lectures, such as that which Dr. Ogle is going to