

ferred for six months will have to produce a certificate of having dissected for three months, and pursued his anatomical and physiological studies to the satisfaction of his teachers for the whole period of six months.

Mr. Heath's motion, to the effect that no candidate be admitted to the Final Membership until after the expiration of two years from the date of his passing the anatomical and physiological examination, was referred for consideration to a Committee, consisting of Messrs. Birkett, Savory, Holmes, Wood, Bryant, Smith, and Heath, to report thereon to the Council.

It was resolved to present a humble address of sympathy and congratulation to Her Majesty on her recent escape from the hands of her would-be assassin.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S HOSPITAL.

THE following *résumé* of a year's work in the Out-patient Department is forwarded by Dr. Percy Boulton:—The number of women delivered at their own homes was 608, and all have made good recoveries. The number of children born was 609; one case of twins, dead. Of the 607 remaining children, 587 lived, and 20 were still-born, or died shortly after birth. The following complications required special treatment: One case of accidental flooding before labour; two cases of placenta prævia, in one of which flooding took place at the seventh month, necessitating premature delivery; three high forceps deliveries, in one there was a very large acephalous foetus, with a hæmatoma growing from the vertex, and no expulsive efforts; two cases of turning for arm and funis presentations; two cases of adherent placenta; and two cases of flooding after labour from uterine inertia.

MEDICAL NOTES IN PARLIAMENT.

IN the House of Lords on Monday, it was resolved, on the motion of the Marquis of Salisbury, to print the Statutes laid on the table this session by the Oxford and Cambridge University Commissioners.

Patent Medicines.

On Thursday, the 2nd inst., Mr. Warton gave notice that, on going into Supply, he would call attention to the sale of patent medicines, and move a resolution. Several notices of opposition to the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill were put down; and Mr. Henegge intimated that he will move to refer the measure to a Select Committee.

Private Lunatic Asylums.

On Monday, Mr. Corbet asked the Attorney-General for Ireland whether, considering the very unsatisfactory arrangements at present existing for the care, maintenance, and medical treatment of insane persons who are detained in private houses in Ireland, under the Acts 5 and 6 Vic., c. 123, and 38 and 39 Vic., c. 67, and the admitted evils connected therewith, he will advise Her Majesty's Government to bring in a Bill to abolish altogether the system of lunatic asylums kept by private individuals for personal gain in Ireland, and to substitute instead a system of self-supporting institutions under the management and control of paid officers, whose only pecuniary interest in them would be the salaries attached to their respective offices. Mr. Johnson replied that this was a question of policy, and therefore it should be addressed to a member of the Cabinet.

The Murder of Dr. Maclean.

Sir C. Dilke stated to Mr. Macintosh that a representation was to be made to the Chilian Government with regard to a claim made by the representatives of the late Dr. Maclean, physician to the British Minister, for compensation for his murder by Chilian troops on January 13th, 1881.

The Alkali Works Regulation Act.

Mr. Dodson informed Sir R. Cross that the attention of manufacturers had been officially drawn to the provisions of the Act, and four new sub-inspectors had been appointed. The time for registration would not expire until the end of this month.

A petition in favour of Mr. H. Gladstone's Union Officers Superannuation (Ireland) Bill was presented from the Royal

College of Surgeons in Ireland. A return was ordered of the number of factories and workshops inspected and not inspected during the year 1881.

Dwellings for the Poor.

On Tuesday, Mr. Firth gave notice of the following question to the Home Secretary:—On Friday, to ask the right hon. gentleman whether he is aware that the various railway, market, and other schemes affecting London, now before Parliament, involve the removal of more than 20,000 of the poorer classes of the metropolis; and whether, pending the constitution of a public body able and willing to protect the interests of the metropolitan poor, he will provide for the insertion into these measures of clauses preventing the demolition of houses now occupied by the poor until proper accommodation for the number scheduled for removal has been provided in the neighbourhood, such clauses to be of at least equal stringency to Clause 33 of the Metropolitan Street Improvement Act, 1877.

On Wednesday, Mr. Redmond gave notice that he would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether, in view of the prevalence of small-pox of a very virulent type in the district of Armagh, he will order the removal of the suspects from Armagh gaol.

On Thursday, a petition was presented by Mr. O'Shaughnessy from medical officers of Limerick in favour of the Superannuation Bill. Lord Emly brought in a Bill to amend the law relating to the burial of suicides. A return was ordered of a memorial which has been addressed to the Treasury respecting the sanctioned importation of sundry vegetable matters, as coffee. The case of Dr. Kenny was the subject of a further question by Mr. Gray, to whom the Attorney-General for Ireland replied that if Dr. Kenny were reinstated as medical officer of the Dublin Union his ten years' service would count towards superannuation.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In your last week's issue a keen and vigorous satire upon the University of London appears from the pen of my old teacher at St. Bartholomew's, Dr. Wickham Legg.

In spite of the reverence one feels for the genius of a preceptor, one cannot but think the objection raised against the "degraded title" and the mode of meeting it tend to diminish the effect attempted. I cannot but look upon the course adopted by Dr. Legg as a renewal of the policy of the Dutch, who cut down most of the precious trees in the Spice Islands in order to raise the value of what remained. The nineteenth century intelligence plumes itself on the vast field it covers, and not on the depth of soil; ambition expands this course.

Surely the inculcation of knowledge into the "weaker vessel," be it even from the field of physiological and pathological research, cannot break down the (happily in our land) time-honoured social element of respect which exists between the sexes. The removal of the misty penumbra of ignorance, as a barrier around our rational perception, I consider not deplorable; yet the education of women should be modified. Victorian admired Preciosa for her infinite affection rather than finite intelligence. Home is woman's sphere. The ethical end is defined as the greatest good to the greatest number. Surely this is not obtained by the injudicious cerebral training so much in vogue at the present time, when women's brains,

"With knowledge cramm'd, as fattening fowls they force."

Does not the great increase of lunacy and the cry for "accommodation" point sternly to the direction we are going? Are we hastening to a national calamity? a puny progeny—a short-lived, under-grown, nervous, cataleptic race? Is not the advancement of effeminacy and the consequent decline of the Roman Empire a historical warning?

The whole question of woman's place has been overwhelmed with a storm of invective; but is not *pour faire parler de nous* still their motto? Let men treat with disdain the hot-headed blue aesthete, and turn their admiration and

noble protection to the type of the true domestic British mother, of which a better illustration can never be found than in our own Royal family. We entertain no apprehension of danger so long as women retain their sphere; we dread only the discredit of their injudicious minds. Dr. Legg may now claim to be insensible to fame and obloquy:

"Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds not keen reproof nor partial praise."

But I deprecate the course he has adopted as an unnecessary infliction upon himself for the unstable aspirations of a feminine mind and the yielding of a point fostering the very essence of their cause.

May the love of domestic bliss be infused more largely into our seemingly half-savage Haidees.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Earlswood, March 6th, 1882. ROBERT JONES, M.B. Lond.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—To allow Dr. Wickham Legg's letter to pass unnoticed would be as great a sin as to make the unwarrantable use of the name of Sir William Jenner that he has done. It is a pity that, before he penned his extraordinary epistle, he did not take care to ascertain the correctness of his facts, and to comprehend aright the remarks in THE LANCET, the misconception of which appears to have been the exciting cause of this sudden volcanic outburst. Let him refer to the Medical Directory, and to the Register, and he will find that it is in the latter that Sir William Jenner does not appear as M.D. Lond., probably because in 1859 he had no object in registering more than one qualification. While in the Directory for 1882 he will detect the insertion of the "degrading title," of which Sir William does not, after all, appear so very ashamed. Why should he? No doubt THE LANCET would be willing to afford the space necessary for the insertion of the names of those who are ashamed of their university. Probably one line would be amply sufficient.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,
March 4th, 1882. M.D. LOND.

THE DANGERS OF CHLOROFORM AND THE SAFETY OF ETHER AS AN ANÆSTHETIC.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I am greatly pleased to think that my former letter has had some effect in directing particular attention to this important subject. Many of the suggestions, as mentioned by your various correspondents, are most valuable in demonstrating the real dangers that attend the administration of the different anæsthetics at present in use. I am quite agreed that a fatal result may follow, no matter what agent is used. However, what I did assert, and what I still assert, is that ether is the least dangerous. I am at the same time aware that if etherisation is pushed too far death may follow, as it does during the administration of other agents; but as far as I know there is nothing in ether obnoxious to human life; and when pushed in anæsthesia to its greatest limits, its action appears to affect the respiratory movements only. And in those very few cases recorded where a fatal result followed its administration, it was found that death occurred by the failure of the respiratory movements, the heart's pulsations continuing generally for some time after respiration had ceased. From this it will be seen that ether has a stimulating, not a depressing effect on the heart, as is the case in chloroform; furthermore, ether gives warning, as indicated by the condition of respiration, and by removing the ether and at once setting up artificial respiration the weak point is promptly acted upon. Whereas in chloroform the heart can be only influenced in this way through the respiration, and time is therefore frequently lost in attempting to avert a fatal issue.

As regards the use of chloroform in obstetric practice, my letter in no way conveyed the idea that I wished to withdraw it entirely from the Pharmacopœia as a therapeutic agent; I merely alluded to its being used in producing complete anæsthesia during the performance of serious surgical operations where ether would suit all purposes quite as well. The apparent haphazard way of administering chloroform, regardless of quantity or mode of adminis-

tration, without a fatal result is certainly remarkable; but, in my opinion, it is no reason why an endeavour should not be made to observe the greatest caution in administering an agent like chloroform, which has proved fatal in so many instances, even when it has been given with the greatest care, and by the most experienced hands. As regards the best form of ether inhaler, I mentioned the one made for me by Coxeter, London, as I considered it the most suitable, combining as it does so many advantages—viz., simplicity, portability (can be carried in the pocket), ease of administration, besides being very moderate in price. I am ready to admit that other inhalers possess advantages as well, and I have no doubt may be as efficient in other hands.

With reference to what has been said about the irritating effects of the ether vapour, this is no doubt experienced by some patients during the first few inhalations, but when the ether vapour becomes warm this effect soon passes away. With a little coaxing and management, and heating the inhaler so as to warm the vapour, I feel sure few patients will refuse to submit to its influence. In fact, I never saw a patient yet who could not take ether.

Mr. Swain, of Plymouth, speaks in favour of bichloride of methylene. I regret to state I cannot agree with him in the view he has taken regarding its safety. The statistics on the subject prove the contrary, as will be seen in the table I append, which is the combined result of statistics collected in America by Dr. Andrews, of Chicago, and those collected in England by Dr. Richardson, as mentioned by the late Professor Morgan. In this table will be seen at a glance the absolute and relative mortality caused by the several anæsthetic agents generally used.

Agent employed.	Deaths.	Admins.	Deaths.	Admins.
Ether	4 in	92,815, or	1 in	23,204
Chloroform	53 in	152,260, or	1 in	2,873
Mixture of chloroform with ether	2 in	11,176, or	1 in	5,588
Bichloride of methylene .	2 in	10,000, or	1 in	5,000

From the foregoing table it will be seen that chloroform appears to be eight times more dangerous than ether, twice as dangerous as a mixture of chloroform and ether, and, as far as we can judge, more dangerous than bichloride of methylene. With such facts and figures before one, the surgeon must necessarily incur grave responsibility if he permits without very good reason a fellow-creature to be suddenly precipitated into the mysterious sleep of insensibility, never to wake again, by means of an agent that has been proved to be eight times more dangerous than ether. No matter what the issues are, he certainly cannot be said to have given his patient the best chance by discarding what statistics have proved to be the safest anæsthetic in use.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
LAMBERT H. ORMSBY, M.D., F.R.C.S.,
Surgeon to the Meath Hospital, Dublin.
Merrion-square West, Dublin, March 8th, 1882.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is remarkable that so able a surgeon as Mr. Swain should be induced to give up the use of ether after one (happily averted) accident, while he regards with equanimity the long list of chloroform deaths. Within the nine short weeks of the present year no less than seven deaths from chloroform have occurred. During the whole of last year only two deaths were directly attributable to ether.

It cannot be too strongly maintained that in a question of this kind personal experience of one man goes for very little. In every discussion on this subject we hear, "I have given chloroform three, four, or five hundred times without a death, therefore it must be a perfectly safe agent." The question must be decided by statistics—not of hundreds, but of tens of thousands of cases. It would be easy to produce evidence of most skilled persons of directly contrary nature—"I have had two or three deaths in five hundred cases;" but neither assertion would be worth much. In twelve hundred cases of ether administration I have had to perform artificial respiration twice; in a hundred cases of chloroform I think four times.

As to methylene, which Mr. Swain proposes to use in future:

1. It belongs to the class of chlorinated compounds which