

was induced to try the Vulcanized Indian rubber, and the result was most satisfactory. I found that its elasticity was not the least impaired by heat or cold, and that it supported with impunity a range of temperature from that of boiling water to below zero.

These Vulcanized cushions were first used in private practice by Mr. Caesar Hawkins in 1847, and employed at St. George's Hospital in January, 1848, since which period they have been in constant use there. I understand that they are still as perfect as when I first supplied them, and from other parties the accounts I receive are equally satisfactory.

I would also observe, that instead of the screw and cork recommended by Mr. Sampson, I have attached to the cushions a tube, with a stop-cock and funnel, which allows the water to be changed, or its temperature modified, without removing the cushion or disturbing the patient.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

Pall Mall East, Oct. 22, 1849.

WILLIAM HOOPER.

GOVERNORS' PRIZES AT THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is exceedingly gratifying to me, as also to all my honourable fellow-students, to observe that the mode of adjudicating these honours has undergone a complete, and doubtless satisfactory, reformation: from this it is evident that my respected instructors have not manifested any indifference towards the complaints which have of late been circulated in THE LANCET, relative to this subject; and it affords me the greater pleasure to find that the decision at which they have arrived exactly coincides with my proposition. Another wise and just regulation has sprung from my letter; I allude to the restriction of competition for the medals generally, to those students who have been connected with the Hospital not more than three years. Both myself and "C. c. J." express our gratitude to you for the promptitude with which you gave publication to our communications. I am convinced that "C. c. J." received no instigation, in introducing this topic, from any revengeful disposition; nor did it originate from his having experienced any disappointment; both of which have been intimated.

Neither "C. c. J." nor myself were ranked among the dressers, yet we could not forbear exclaiming against a system injudicious and condemnable; which fostered such behaviour that aroused the indignation of truly moral students, who would found their reputation and urbanity on their diligence, integrity, and talent.

Now, Sir, I believe the controversy will cease. I have excluded from this, as from my former letter, every hostile expression.

London Hospital, Oct. 1849.

A STUDENT.

THE INQUEST AT SOUTH SHIELDS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has just been called, by a medical friend, to THE LANCET, of Oct. 6, which contains an offensive article on the recent inquest at South Shields.

I have seen THE LANCET for Sept. 1, in which you thus stated your opinion:—"We cannot discover that any blame attaches to Mr. Kennedy. We have seen the report—Dr. Glover could give no other evidence. The strictures on Mr. Kennedy are, we think, very unjust; we cannot publish them." In the propriety of that course I coincided, and after the public expression of an opinion so decided and distinct, was certainly not prepared for the recent fierce and insulting attack.

Before inserting it you must have been imposed on and misled. It is true I have never been a licentiate of the London company, but it is not true that I am an unqualified practitioner. I have the honour to be a licentiate of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow—a body not quite unrecognised or unknown in the profession—and was regularly educated in the university and medical schools of that city. My character and practice for the last fifteen years are known in South Shields.

In the late inquest, as in previous inquests, the coroner summoned me to give evidence, and commanded me to analyze some suspected drugs. I had no right to ask or know from what parties they came; but, when commanded to give evidence before any court of justice, to make *post mortems*, or to analyze drugs suspected of poison, it has never been my custom to decline the responsibility which that duty imposes. Parties connected with this case may know the fact by previous experience.

It might, however, be expected, I think, that after fifteen

years' medical practice, I should know my own standing in the profession and in society too well to hazard false and reckless evidence in a public court, and then seek a shelter from its consequences in perjury. And I also think, Sir, you will acknowledge that I have some reason to complain, when, in the conscientious effort to discharge duties, often painful enough, to defend life from poison, and to maintain the utility and independence of the medical profession, I am subjected to ferocious and unmanly attacks from interested parties in a public journal. That the editor of THE LANCET is capable of persisting in wrong in defiance of truth and justice, I cannot believe; and in consequence, though advised that the attack is libellous, I have no present inclination to seek legal redress, provided an apology be made, such as you consider adequate, in the same place where the attack has been; and that the names of the parties who have dared to impose on a public journalist such unscrupulous statements—for they are evidently connected with this neighbourhood—be given up immediately in the same place to the public reprobation.

I remain, Sir, yours obediently,

South Shields, Oct. 24, 1849.

J. T. KENNEDY, S.T.T.S.G.

** We received this letter just as the journal was going to press. As an act of justice to Mr Kennedy, we have thought it right to give the letter an immediate place in our columns.—Ed. L.

Medical News.

APOTHECARIES' HALL.—Names of gentlemen who passed their examination in the science and practice of medicine, and received certificates to practise, on

Thursday, Oct. 18th, 1849.

MORGAN, DAVID, Llandilo, Carmarthenshire.

PRITCHARD, JOSIAH, Melbourne, Wilts.

SHARPLEY, HAY, Louth, Lincolnshire.

RAPID BRONCHOTOMY.—M. Chassaignac, surgeon to the Hôpital Saint Antoine, at Paris, lately stated to the Surgical Society that he performed the operation of tracheotomy on a child affected with croup, in the following expeditious manner. The larynx was steadied by thrusting a tenaculum through the cricoid membrane and the skin; the subjacent tissues and the rings of the trachea were then divided by one cut of an ordinary pointed bistoury. The same surgeon advises, when a canula is not immediately at hand, to pass a thread through each lip of the wound, and fasten that thread to a needle thrust through a fold of skin on either side of the trachea. M. Chassaignac's mode of operating was attacked by several members; as for us, we do not see how the air could penetrate in sufficient amount without taking off part of the rings, and how the lips of the wound, stretched on both sides, would make the incision of the trachea sufficiently patulous, not to speak of the danger of such a rapid and violent use of the knife.

APPOINTMENTS.—The *London Gazette* of Tuesday, October 23rd, contains the appointment of WILLIAM FERGUSON, Esq., F.R.S., Surgeon to King's College Hospital, as surgeon in ordinary to Prince Albert, in the room of the late Mr. Aston Key.—On the 17th inst., Dr. D. LEWIS, of Finsbury-place, was unanimously elected one of the physicians to the Royal General Dispensary, Aldersgate-street.

NAVAL ASSISTANT-SURGEONS.—We learn that petitions to parliament to ameliorate the condition of these officers are in course of preparation in different towns—Chatham, Gravesend, Maidstone, &c., for presentation in the ensuing session. We hope that other towns will not remain long behind-hand in a like endeavour to secure justice towards a deserving and useful class of public officers.

HOSPITAL STAFF IN SPAIN.—Spanish medical papers have been very clamorous about the appointment (by concours) of a surgeon to the hospital of Avila, Dr. Gimenez y Ramoz Perez, the successful candidate, being offered the magnificent salary of thirteen-pence halfpenny a day! Truly such situations are not sought for the sake of the "filthy lucre." It is well known that the first physicians in Paris are allowed only fifteen-pence per diem for their hospital attendance, and the medical staff of English hospitals and dispensaries fatten there upon nothing at all.

MUSEUM OF THE LATE DR. THOMSON.—This fine collection of specimens of the *materia medica*, with many illustrative drawings, has been purchased by government for the Queen's College at Cork, and is now in progress of being removed from University College. The friends of the latter institution are greatly grieved at this loss.