

Masters, but my engagements have prevented me from so doing.

Having thus disposed of the novelty of the invention, I must trespass a little longer upon your indulgence by soliciting permission to write a few words relative to the false assertion made by Mr. Masters, that I was a competitor with him at the Great Exhibition, and failed to obtain a prize.

The real truth is, that having a spare corner in my case amongst the large collection of orthopædic inventions therein exhibited, I placed two small models of an artificial leg recently invented by Dr. Bly, of America, and entrusted to me for construction. These models of legs, however, I solemnly assert, were never examined by any member of the jury, my sole object being to render the contents of my case an illustration of the modern system pursued in the treatment of deformities, and not the plans adopted in the construction of artificial limbs. Had I done so, it would have been on a larger scale, when the sound anatomical principles embraced by Dr. Bly's invention would have entirely placed in the shade any and every limb in Mr. Masters' case. It must also be remembered that the only collection of artificial limbs shown, as well as Mr. Masters', received a prize, thus proving the incompleteness of his triumph over other competitors.

In addition I have only to add, that my case, as an entity, was rewarded with a medal, to disprove Mr. Masters' statement as to my being an unsuccessful competitor, and show that the victory of which he boasts only exists in his own imagination.

Having thus set myself right with your readers, I must decline any further correspondence with anyone so grossly perverting the facts as Mr. Masters has done.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
Leicester square, July, 1863. HEATHER BIGG.

PRESERVATION OF VACCINE LYMPH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Permit me to advert briefly to the contents of Mr. Cripps's letter on the above subject in THE LANCET of the 11th inst.

The method of preserving lymph practised by Mr. Cripps—namely, by placing the lymph between two flat pieces of glass—was passed over in my second lecture on Vaccination, because I do not believe it to be a method “to be recommended,” although, as I am quite aware, the method in question is, particularly in some districts in the country, largely employed. In the hands of those who, like Mr. Cripps, have been accustomed to use lymph preserved in this manner it may be to a certain extent unobjectionable; but I am quite certain it is not a plan to be recommended for universal adoption, being vastly inferior to the “tubes,” and less certain even than the “points.”

Mr. Cripps has drawn an incorrect inference as to that part of my lecture referring to the “insertion success” of various operators. The 84 per cent. of successful insertion spoken of by me does not mean 84 per cent. of *cases*, but of the total number of punctures made. I do not regard 84 per cent. of *cases* as a high percentage of success. The best arm-to-arm vaccinators very rarely fail to vaccinate successfully 98 or 99 per cent. of *cases* at the first operation.

Further, any statement as to the numerical success of vaccination by particular practitioners should be accompanied by details as to the number of vesicles produced in each case, in order that we may be able to estimate the real degree of success met with.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

Berkeley-square, July, 1863. GRAILY HEWITT, M.D.

ON IMPREGNATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—It is a well known fact that queen bees lay female eggs first, and male eggs afterwards. Also, that if her conception be protracted beyond a lunar month from her birth, she will produce males only.

In the human female, conception in the first half of the time between menstrual periods produces female offspring, and male in the latter.

Numerous instances of females being “out” in reckoning the time of their parturition gave rise in my mind to a suspicion of the existence of some “law” as a cause; and from the frequency of a male child coming, I usually concluded and predicted that a late case was due to “an idle boy,” and rarely failed in being right. The law above stated explains those irregularities; and its existence has been confirmed by a friend

on whose testimony as to its being a fact implicit reliance may be placed.

That law of generation applies also to animals, and probably to all animated beings.

Whether regarded as applicable to produce a male or a female population, an heir or an heiress to a title or an estate, or a successor to a throne,—or to the incalculable advantages of breeding male or female stock, and ultimately rendering the whole feminine creation subservient to the necessities and will of man,—it must tend to raise our admiration of the Creator's power of regulating our existence by laws even more mysterious than those yet known to us.

Evidence of the universal existence of such a law, and of its applicability to the purposes of man in “affording a check to an overpopulating of the globe,” counterbalancing the effects of war and emigration by raising a male population, in proportion to the demand, instead of females, and in breeding male instead of female flesh for the service and sustenance of our race, may be naturally expected in time, as its bearing among animated nature becomes understood and developed.

Hoping that this communication may serve to increase our physiological knowledge of uterine functions, I beg your permission to have it inserted in your scientific and valuable journal.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,
Wimborne, July, 1863. F. J. W. PACKMAN, M.D.

HEALTH OF THE LETTER-CARRIERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the ninth report of the Postmaster-General, under the head of “General Health of the Officers,” the following sentence occurs:—

“The attacks of rheumatism and diarrhoea continue to diminish in number and in intensity, as they have done since the Macintosh capes have been discontinued to the letter-carriers, and since the supply of water from the pump belonging to the Goldsmith's Company has been stopped, and less impure filtered water supplied in its place.”

It would certainly be very desirable to ascertain whether the improvement mentioned is due to the supply of pure water or to the wearing of the said capes. I should be glad to hear the opinion of anyone conversant with the subject.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
July, 1863. J. C.

THE CONSTANTINOPLE MATERNITY CHARITY IN HONOUR OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT AT CONSTANTINOPLE.)

FOR a very long time a necessity has been felt in Constantinople for the institution of some society or hospital for the relief of poor sick women and children during their illness, as it is proved that many more women and children die from diseases peculiar to them in this city than in many others in Europe.

Many propositions have, at various times, been made, but little success has attended them until two philanthropists, of European celebrity, came to Constantinople—viz., Sir Moses Montefiore and Dr. Hodgkin. The necessity having been pointed out to them, Sir Moses and his friend at once took an interest in the proposition, and subscribed liberally. A preliminary meeting was held on Monday, the 1st of June, at the Hotel of Missirés, in Pera, when it was determined to found, under the patronage of Lady Bulwer, the above-named institution, in honour of Miss Nightingale. The Rev. C. B. Gribble, the Chaplain to the Embassy, being present, was appointed the treasurer.

Several of the chief physicians in Constantinople have supported the idea for the foundation of this institution, which will bear the name of a lady who did so much at Scutari during the late war. Although it is possible that a sufficient fund may be found in this capital to carry on this praiseworthy undertaking, still, for its proper development, it is hoped that charitable persons in England will assist, by subscriptions, in carrying forward that which has been begun by the persons before referred to.

It may be remarked that at the present time there is no hospital for the reception of sick women and children in Constantinople, except the French, situate at Ferikieny, a long distance