

INVENTION OF THE PERCUSSOR.—LETTER  
FROM MR. WEISS.*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Permit me to correct an error into which Mr. Edwards has fallen in regard to my instrument for crushing stones in the bladder, which he characterises as not only “obsolete and useless,” but as “being designed for very different purposes.” Although the subsequent improvements of Baron Heurteloup in the lithotriptic instruments may have superseded my invention; I beg leave to remind the Baron’s champion, Mr. Edwards, that my now “obsolete and useless invention” suggested the idea of the Baron’s Percussor, which is only an improvement upon mine. I also beg to say, that my instrument was invented expressly for the purpose of crushing stones in the bladder. It was submitted to Mr. Brodie for his inspection eight years ago, but was laid aside at the suggestion of a very eminent surgeon, who feared that the bladder might be injured by the fragments of stone being propelled with too great violence in their separation, by its fracture. I subsequently showed the instrument to the Baron, stating the objection made to its employment, which, however, he overcame by injecting the bladder.

I need not trouble you with a description of the instrument, it has been fully explained by Mr. Costello. I, however, subsequently made one of the same shape, with a saw concealed in the blades for cutting, and finally crushing, stones in the bladder, which I published in my first catalogue of instruments. This plan was laid aside only in consequence of the rumours of the repeated success of Dr. Civiale’s straight instruments. Now for what purpose does Mr. Edwards suppose I would have been at this expense and trouble if not for the purpose of crushing the stone? Not to crack nuts for monkeys. The Baron has always remunerated me for any instruments I have made for him, and I hope he will be as liberal in rewarding Mr. Edwards.

I have the highest respect for the Baron Heurteloup as a man of science, and one who is skilful in mechanical invention. He spares neither labour nor expense in bringing his designs to perfection; in the course of his experiments he must have accumulated a room full of instruments, of every shape, for crushing the stone, which he has successively thrown aside as useless, and I have not the least doubt, if he can find purchasers among the profession, he will be very glad to dispose of them at

one quarter their cost. He therefore can duly appreciate the labour and the ingenuity required in the invention of instruments, more particularly those in which are combined the most delicate formation, with great power; and he would not, I am sure, have made mention of the invention of any other man in so supercilious a manner. The subsequent improvement of an instrument, I submit, does not invalidate the claims of its first inventor to some degree of merit, and as I depend for my support upon the success of my exertions, and as a disparaging remark might, however unintentionally made, injure me in my business, I trust to your liberality to favour me with the insertion of this letter. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN WEISS,

62, Strand, 7th Sept. 1833.

## LIBRARIES FOR HOSPITAL PATIENTS.

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—Though I have not the honour of being a member of the profession, yet I take great interest in their proceedings, and am a reader of *THE LANCET* and other medical publications. In the course of my reading I do not recollect having noticed that there are libraries in the public hospitals for the perusal of the inmates. If there be not, I would suggest that they be established, thinking, as I do, that their contents often console the afflicted, and by amusing the mind tend to alleviate the sufferings of the body, and, probably, promote recovery. If you think the suggestion good, perhaps you will communicate it to your readers, that they may see if it be worthy of adoption. Thanking you for the instruction which your publication has afforded me, I remain, yours truly,

E. J. HYTCH.

## THE SHEFFIELD DISPENSARY.

## TREATMENT OF MEDICAL MEN.

*[From a Correspondent.]*

THE readers of *THE LANCET* have already had an opportunity of seeing in its pages the memorial addressed to the Governors of the Sheffield Public Dispensary, by the medical profession of this place. It will be recollected that the memorial was directed to be laid before the Governors at their special general meeting on the 5th of August, which special meeting was called “to receive and decide upon the report from the sub-com-