

IMPROVEMENT IN THE VOLTAIC PILE. It is well known that Bunsen's pile, which is but a modification of Grove's, consists of a glazed vessel, containing a cylindrical element of zinc, which surrounds a porous vessel filled with strong nitric acid, into which a charcoal cylinder has been introduced, the liquid in the outermost vessel consisting of water acidulated with about ten parts of sulphuric acid. Now, although this is a most powerful combination, and in general use, it has two great inconveniences: first, the quantity of nitrous vapour it evolves is highly unpleasant, and may become dangerous; and, secondly, the current produced is not of constant intensity. M. Thomas has just communicated to the Academy of Sciences a modification which he has effected in this kind of pile, and which would seem to be quite free from the inconvenience alluded to. M. Thomas, in fact, shows that the development of nitrous vapour is one of the chief causes which interfere with the constancy of the current, inasmuch as they attack the copper ribands forming the electrodes, and effect certain chemical combinations, which give rise to counter-currents, and thus impair the principal one. He therefore causes these gases, as they are evolved, to pass into a porous vessel, where they are decomposed. In this process, a secondary current is produced, which, by the peculiar construction of the apparatus, is turned to account, and tends to correct the inequalities of the principal current. This arrangement also prevents the pile from becoming dirty, as is the case with Bunsen's pile.

ACTION FOR BREACH OF CONTRACT. In the Vice-Chancellor's Court, on Dec. 2nd, an action was tried before Vice-Chancellor Sir J. Stuart, in which the plaintiff, Mr. Giles, surgeon, of Great Coggeshall, in Essex, sought an injunction to restrain Mr. Hart, the defendant, from practising as a surgeon and apothecary, or surgeon, or from acting as a physician, in the said town, or within five miles thereof, during the plaintiff's life. In April 1854, the plaintiff, then and now a general practitioner at Great Coggeshall, engaged the defendant as his assistant, at a salary of £80 per annum; and, by an indenture which was then entered into, the defendant covenanted that he would during such time as the plaintiff should carry on his business, or until the indenture should be determined by notice, act as the plaintiff's assistant; and that he (the defendant) would not, "whether such indenture should be in other respects determined or not", act as the assistant of any other medical practitioner, or either by himself or in partnership practise medicine or surgery in Great Coggeshall, or within five miles. The deed contained a power for the plaintiff or defendant to determine the indenture by giving one calendar month's notice in writing. The defendant had acted as the plaintiff's assistant up to the 11th of November, when he left, a month's notice having been given; since which time he had, as alleged by the plaintiff, set up on his own account in Great Coggeshall. The Vice-Chancellor granted an injunction until further order.

THE PROSECUTION OF THE BENNETT GANG. At the Lambeth Police Court on Saturday, Mr. Samuel Smith, surgeon, of Langham Place West, waited on the Honourable Mr. Norton regarding the case of Mr. Jones, who had been the prosecutor against the notorious quack impostors, Watters, Edwards, and Allen, a portion of the Bennett gang, and who had been put to an expense of upwards of £60, an amount which placed him in the most straitened circumstances. Mr. Smith handed a list of subscriptions, amounting altogether to £22 5s., which was headed with a subscription of £5 5s., from the London Medical Registration Association, and the second item was one of £5 5s. from Mr. Smith himself. Mr. Norton, on looking over the list, expressed much regret that the sum received by the poor man was so small, not more than a third of the amount which he was actually out of pocket. The Medical Registration Association, he understood, had at its disposal a very large sum of money; and, as Mr. Smith had already taken so kind an interest in the poor man's case, he (Mr. Norton) thought it would be desirable that he should wait on the Medical Association, and say it was his (Mr. Norton's) opinion that the case was one in which they should extend their liberality, and not leave Jones a loser.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY. The number of students at the university is considerably larger than it was last year. On the 23rd November, 1356 students had been enrolled; last year the total number who matriculated was 1296. The increase is chiefly in the literary faculty; but the number of medical students (486) shows an increase of 10.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENTS should always enclose their names to the Editor; not for publication, but in token of good faith. No attention can be paid to communications not thus authenticated.

Members should remember that corrections for the current week's JOURNAL should not arrive later than Wednesday.

AN ASSOCIATE. Yes.

Communications have been received from:—ALIIQUIS; MR. ROBT. JONES; MR. RD. FAIRCLOTH; DR. F. J. BROWN; AN ASSOCIATE; DR. SEDGWICK; DR. WALKER; MR. C. B. GARRATT; DR. W. O. MARKHAM; DR. SEATON; MR. R. S. FOWLER; MR. F. J. SANDFORD; THE SECRETARY OF THE HARVEIAN SOCIETY; DR. WILLIAM CAMPS; MR. H. GRANGER EARNSHAW; MR. FREDERICK FRX; DR. JOHN ARMSTRONG; DR. JAS. RUSSELL; MR. CROSBY LEONARD; MR. HAYNES WALTON; THE SECRETARY OF THE PORTSMOUTH, PORTSEA, AND GOSPORT MEDICAL REGISTRATION ASSOCIATION; MR. T. HOLMES; MR. OLIVER PEMBERTON; DR. C. H. JONES; and MR. W. M. CLARKE.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

[* An Asterisk is prefixed to the names of Members of the Association.]

1. Descriptive Catalogue of the Preparations in the Museum of St. Thomas's Hospital. Printed by Order of the Governors. Volumes II and III. Pathological Anatomy. Compiled and Edited by Sydney Jones, F.R.C.S., M.B. London: H. Renshaw. 1859.

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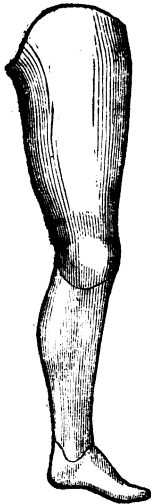
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