

London hospitals compared with those of Paris. The debate still continues, its latest incident being a letter from M. Husson, Director of the *Assistance Publique* of Paris, from which I take the following extracts: "A large portion of the hospital at Glasgow has just been rebuilt on an improved plan, and in London, the Hospital of King's College has received an addition of two or three new wards, which in truth are rather large, but are by no means favourably arranged. Now, it is these improvements on which the whole debate is made to rest. The hospitals of London contain only 3,700 beds for a population which is double that of Paris. The hospitals of the latter city contain 7,000 beds, without counting the beds of the sick wards in the hospices; we have therefore to provide for greater wants under more difficult circumstances. Most of our hospitals are situated on high grounds, or in the midst of plantations free from houses, as in the case of Beaujon, Lariboisière, Saint Antoine, La Pitié, Cochin, Les Enfants Malades, and Necker. Nothing of the kind exists in London. With the exception of a single hospital situated near Hyde Park, all the hospitals of the city are built in the midst of populous districts, and in narrow streets. They have generally neither gardens nor yards, and the sick wards receive light from one side only, which is a great defect. There are even dissecting rooms in several of the hospitals. Now, these are the establishments which are compared to ours! It is true, the wards of these imperfect hospitals in general contain fewer patients than ours. The English like to have large open spaces in their wards, but by an illogical arrangement, they pack the beds closer together. There is no bad smell in the hospitals of London, although there is no artificial ventilation, and this advantage, with few exceptions, we certainly do not enjoy at Paris. But in London, they open the windows during the doctor's visit, and several times a-day, which explains the absence of smells. The English beds are much more simply constructed than ours, which are too complicated. There are no curtains to the English beds. The wards are warmed by fire-places, but it is a mistake to believe them sufficient to ventilate the rooms, or to suppose that they can replace a well-arranged artificial ventilation. There are no refectories in most of the London hospitals. At Guy's Hospital the dining-tables are placed in the sick wards. I will not continue this parallel any further, but I beg the Academy to keep in mind, that various improvements, especially as regards the bedding, are in contemplation for the hospitals of Paris."

A recent discovery shows the manner in which chemistry can be applied to archæology. Some time ago, two human skeletons were found in stone coffins at Vertheuil, in the department of Seine at Oise. The bones, though brittle, were in a perfect state of preservation, and everything tended to show that these skeletons had been buried many centuries ago. M. Conerbe, a chemist of some note, having obtained the shoulder-blade of one of these relics of past ages, subjected it to analysis, and found that it contained only ten per cent. of organic matter, besides the usual mineral substances of which bones are composed. Now as fresh bones contain 33 per cent. of organic matter, it follows that the bones of the skeletons at Vertheuil, had lost 23 per cent. of organic substances. From this fact, M. Conerbe has endeavoured to deduce the age of the bones he has examined. M. Vogelsong, he observes, has found that bones which had been