form, and, using the handkerchief of the patient to enclose it, I applied it cautiously to the mouth and nostrils; after about twenty inhalations, the narcotic effect of the vapour was evident, and in less than a minute and a half produced complete somnolency.

The return of consciousness, in the majority of the patients, was gradual, natural, and resembled the act of awaking from a deep slumber. In one case only I remarked a slight tendency to nausea.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Lower Brook-street, Nov. 1847. C. STOKES, M.R.C.S.

MEMORY "CHECK-BOOKS" FOR PRESCRIPTIONS.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The accompanying suggestion towards abridging the mechanical labour of the routine of daily practice will be acceptable to those who have experienced the often painfully laborious extent to which the memory of the prescribing practitioner is at present taxed. In practice abroad it occurred to me to resort to a check-book (for prescribing), made and used after the same plan as a banking cheque-book. Detail must be needless, to suggest the conveniences of its general employment.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,
BURTON GEORGE HAYGARTH, M.D.
London, Jan. 1848.

No.	No.	Name, Occupation, Address, }
R		
Hamilton, South Canada, day, month, 184		HAYGARTH, Physician.

* * Dr. HAYGARTH, who resides at Cumberland-terrace, Regent's-park, in a private memorandum accompanying the specimen, a copy of which we print just as it was executed "for local purposes," justly observes that it is "by no means improper or undesirable, that every prescription should bear the surname and designation of the prescriber, legibly given. A formality in the mode of prescribing which the use of check-books gives also appears to be an advantage to the profession in the eyes of the public. The immediate record, and the means of after reference, which the "Check" supplies, are no small benefits in addition to the aspect of order and precision which the plan presents. It is to be understood, of course, that in writing the prescription, a corresponding memorandum is made upon the blank space left when the prescription is torn off."—ED. L.

BOA-VISTA FEVER.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your final notice of Dr. McWilliam's report, referring to the fever at Boa Vista, recalls to my recollection a similar occurrence in the latter end of 1827, or the beginning of 1828, at St. Iago, Lake de Verd, proving that these virulent epidemics are not unusual in this group of islands. On the occasion I allude to, the mortality was very fearful; among other victims, the British Consul and some members of his family died, his duties being performed by the American Consul, who was only recovering from the effects of the epidemic. Her Majesty's ship Tweed, I believe, touched there on her route to the Cape Station, and a party of the junior officers went on shore, and all died, with the exception of one, who, a few months after, was pointed out to me at the Cape, looking deplorably out of health. I was at Port Praya, in the month of March, 1828, where we remained a week to water, and the troops under my care, after we left the island, were affected with slight fever of a typhoid character; but I did not lose any, except one in whom tubercular disease supervened. As I am writing entirely from memory, I cannot tell you whether the fever had been introduced by any ship landing from the African coast, or whether generated on the island; I rather think the latter. The Portuguese troops on the island were at that time very badly off, not having received pay for many months. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
January, 1848. AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

ARMY AND NAVY ASSISTANT-SURGEONS.
A PARALLEL.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Will you kindly permit an old naval surgeon to drop a word of advice, through your valuable journal, to such professional young men as may be about to enter the public service; and thereby perchance save some who, like myself, may be foolish enough to prefer the present penny to the future pound. I am the more inclined to do so just now, that the Lords of the Admiralty are adding another to the many marks of disrespect already shown the medical men of the naval service, by depriving them of the little outward mark of respect which a proper uniform conferred, as I find I am, after twenty years' faithful service, and becoming grey-headed in her Majesty's service, to put on a coat rather like, but not half so respectable as, a railway porter's. The following tabular view will enable our young friends to judge which branch of the public service it is advisable to enter:—

<i>Army Assistant-Surgeon.</i>	<i>Naval Assistant-Surgeon.</i>
On joining, becomes a member of a mess of grown-up gentlemen, where he is treated as one, as long as his conduct merits it. He is allowed a servant, or remuneration for one, and has suitable quarters.	Enters a midshipman's mess, composed of noisy boys. Has no servant allowed, or cabin, but a small sea chest, on which he may sit and read, if the first lieutenant does not object.

Passes from seven to nine years before promotion, as proved by statistics.	The same, by statistics.
On promotion to a surgeoncy, has the same rank, position, and quarters as a captain.	On promotion ranks with, but after, a naval lieutenant, wears a derogatory uniform, and receives from 1s. to 3s. per diem less in each scale of pay than his army medical brother.

If married, may hope to pass more or less of his time in England, or with his family.	If, unfortunately, married, can only hope for domestic happiness after twenty-five years' service afloat.

Army surgeons receive the same prize-money as those with whom they rank—viz., captains.	Naval surgeons receive half the sum of prize-money as those with whom they rank—viz., lieutenants.

The widows and children of army surgeons receive the same pensions and gratuities as those of their relative rank—viz., captains.	The widows and children of naval surgeons receive one-third less than the persons they rank with. They receive exactly the same as the relicts of army veterinary surgeons.

Army surgeons are divided into classes, according to their standing, and may reasonably hope to reach a deputy-inspectorship of hospitals.	Naval surgeons have but one class for all ages and length of service, and may hope against hope for a further step.

It will be thus seen that the position of the naval surgeon is, in all its stages, infinitely below that of his army brother. Let any young man about to enter the public service beware of choosing the former, which has produced so many disappointed hearts, and broken-down constitutions. But few men who can honestly say it is a fit position for a medical gentleman.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Dec. 1847. AN OLD NAVAL SURGEON.

ASSISTANT-SURGEONS IN THE NAVY.
To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the last number of THE LANCET, there is a letter signed "A CAPTAIN, R.N.," in which it is stated that Sir William Burnett is opposed to any change being made in the present position of the assistant-surgeons of the navy. As it is possible that Sir William may not find himself at liberty to reply to this statement, I beg to assure you that it is devoid of truth, and altogether at variance with his opinions on the subject, as may be seen by a reference to his evidence before the Naval and Military Commission. I enclose you my address, and can vouch for the truth of what I have stated.

Your obedient servant,
January, 1848. A SURGEON, R.N.
* * The evidence referred to by our correspondent, with whose name and address we have been made acquainted, justifies the statement made by him in the above communication.—ED. L.