The appearance of cholera in Newcastle.

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—As the cholera has shown itself here during the last week in an epidemic form, it may be interesting to some of your readers to know the particulars of the outbreak. I am only sorry that the pressure of other engagements, and the absence of any systematic organization, prevent me from furnishing anything like a complete account of the cases which have proved fatal in Newcastle and the immediate neighbourhood.

The first case of which I am aware was that of Martha O---, aged twenty-four, the wife of a carpenter, residing at Bell Quay, a manufacturing village situated on the south bank of the Tyne, about three miles below Newcastle. On the 28th ult., she was seized with diarrhoea, which was allowed to continue without medical aid till Wednesday, the 31st August, when, following morning, at his request, I visited her. She was then in a state which might have been guarded as the usual symptoms of the collapse of malignant cholera. She rapidly seized with severe cramps, vomiting, rice-water evacuations, coldness of the face, breath, extremities, and chest, lividity of the hands, and a peculiar corpse-like expression of the countenance,—in fact, the usual symptoms of the collapse of malignant cholera. Mr. Birley, surgeon of this town, was sent for, and applied the usual remedies, stimulants, opium, calomel, warmth, frictions, &c., but without beneficial effect, and on the following morning, about eleven o'clock, she also exhibited the same full symptoms of collapse. In the evening I saw her, and found her restless, but free from pain, the face, arms, and chest quite cold, but the feet retained their natural heat. She did not experience any sensation of coldness, but complained of great thirst. We tried opium fully, both with calomel in the form of pills, and with diffusible stimulents, as ether, aromatic spirit of ammonia, using at the same time hot turpentine fomentations to the whole body. In the second case, taking a hint from the instinctive desire for cold water, and knowing iced water had previously been recommended, we allowed her some ice to dissolve slowly in the mouth, ordering at the same time a large blister over the chest and abdomen. The burning sensation in the stomach was relieved by the ice, and the poor people having so recently had another death in the house, were unable to render the necessary attention.

To return to the first-mentioned case, it will be remembered that she came from Bell Quay to Newcastle, on the morning of August 31st. On the evening of the same day, Elizabeth H---, aged 16, having been suffering from diarrhoea since August 27th, and died on September 3rd, having been seized with symptoms of choleraic collapse, and died on the following morning at nine o'clock, having been ill only fifteen hours. Her son, Michael Handy, aged 16, had been suffering from diarrhoea since August 27th. Mr. Furness, Mr. Miller, Mr. Newton, and several other medical practitioners in Newcastle and Gateshead, have had fatal cases; the period is shortening between the accession of the stage of collapse and death has varied from seven hours to two days, or even the second, which occurred in Newcastle. Since then, Dr. White, Mr. Furness, Mr. Miller, Mr. Newton, and several other medical practitioners in Newcastle and Gateshead, have had fatal cases; the period is shortening between the accession of the stage of collapse and death has varied from seven hours to two days, or even more, but as yet I have not heard of any recovery after the collapse has been fully established. In the first case to which I was called, we tried opium fully, both with calomel in the form of pills, and with diffusible stimulents, as ether, aromatic spirit of ammonia, using at the same time hot turpentine fomentations to the whole body. In the second case, taking a hint from the instinctive desire for cold water, and knowing iced water had previously been recommended, we allowed her some ice to dissolve slowly in the mouth, ordering at the same time a large blister over the chest and abdomen. The burning sensation in the stomach was relieved by the ice, and the poor people having so recently had another death in the house, were unable to render the necessary attention.

Correspondence.

"Audire alteram partem."