the fracture being in the same position and of the same character as the last.

I do not attempt any commentary on the above cases, but, thinking them facts of importance, as bearing on the question (now *sub judice*) as to the treatment of the insane, consider it right to detail them. From the very nature of the point at issue, such facts only can be considered trustworthy as are observed and detailed by "outsiders," as the keepers in our asylums will naturally try to screen themselves by perverting the facts where violence has been used.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Rothwell, Northamptonshire, Sept. 1870. JAMES MORE, M.D.

NAVAL MEDICAL SERVICE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your assertions are generally made with caution, on reliable authority, and I have noticed in your last week's editorial a statement that appears to me to put the Admiralty entirely in the wrong as concerns the question of Greenwich Hospital pensions to inspectors and deputy inspectors-general.

You state that, "The Treasury minute by which the addition of three pensions was authorised upon the abolition of Greenwich Hospital expressly stipulated that no new appointments were to be made until the number of pensions had been reduced to three."

It is most necessary that the merits of this question should be clearly and fully stated to the profession. The present Board of Admiralty have abolished the appointments of two inspectors, two deputy inspectors, and six first-class surgeons, thus destroying, to that extent, the rewards of long service. In 1865, when the Greenwich Hospital Act was passed, Mr. Childers told the House of Commons that "the doctors will have no cause of complaint, as they will find increased employment in the hospital"; and he therefore gave no Greenwich pension to the rank of inspector, and only one to that of deputy-inspector.

Notwithstanding this statement, he successfully opposed the appointment of an inspector-general to Greenwich Hospital in 1866.

In 1869, when further changes were contemplated, it was busily rumoured that two pensions of £100 a year each would be granted to inspectors-general in consideration of the loss of Greenwich Hospital appointments; and at that time three pensions of that amount were given to officers of the grade, and these were officially notified in the Navy List, together with the older pensions. This act of seeming liberality and good faith satisfied the profession that the Admiralty intended to act as justly towards it as it had to the other branches of the service dispossessed of offices in Greenwich Hospital. Since then every vestige of employment for medical officers at Greenwich Hospital has been swept away, and two of these pensions to inspectors-general, which you state "were authorised upon the abolition of Greenwich Hospital," have been already withdrawn, and the grant is now confessed to have been merely a temporary expedient.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Sept. 20th, 1870.

SCRUTATOR.

THE SIAMESE TWINS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Referring in your journal of last week to the paralytic seizures from which one of the Siamese Twins has recently suffered, you express an opinion that the fact that Eng's health has been unaffected by the paralysed condition of his brother goes far to show that they enjoy separate vitalities. I have within the last few days received letters from themselves and their family, giving me particulars of poor Chang's sudden illness, which confirm your views respecting the possibility of their separation in case of the predecease of one of them. They write:—

"We sailed from Liverpool on the 29th of July, and had a pretty rough passage. After being out about a week, Chang lost the use of his right side. We were sitting in the saloon playing checks (draughts), when he suddenly

became paralysed. We landed in New York on Aug. 13th, and by this time he could talk a little. We got home on the 20th, and found all well. The route from New York is long and tiresome; but we got on as well as could be expected. We find very little improvement in the paralysed side....."

By the same mail one of Chang's daughters wrote to me as follows:—

"I am so distressed about poor papa's condition. He is so low-spirited; has nothing at all to say, and is so unlike his former self. He can scarcely move without assistance. To-day he has been trying to use a crutch, and thinks he can get on with it with some assistance. His whole right side is perfectly useless; he has no power to control any part of it, and we can but just understand what he says. He does not think he will get over it. Uncle tries to cheer him up, but he has nothing to say. I am so thankful that he is at home again."

I especially direct your attention to the sentence mentioning Eng's endeavours to cheer and comfort his brother, as indicative not only of unselfish kindness in that which must be considered a mutual misfortune, but also of a distinct and separate volition and vitality. It accords with what I observed when they were in England last year—that frequently one was indisposed whilst the other was in perfect health.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY LEE, F.L.S.

The Waldrons, Croydon, Sept. 20th, 1870.

THE INFANTS' HOME, GREAT CORAM-STREET.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Being a reader of THE LANCET, I noticed in the number of the 3rd inst. a comment on the Infants' Home, Great Coram-street. I showed the same to Mrs. Main, the founder and superintendent of the Home, and she desired me to write to you so that things might appear as they are. It may not be uninteresting to your readers to know how the institution originated, being of recent growth (seven years). The many cases of baby-farming exciting a good deal of attention to the subject, the lady already mentioned was moved by the idea "how could the fearful amount of infanticide actually known to be rife be prevented?" She opened this institution with a view to further this object by receiving deserted mothers, who are suckling their children, into the Home until their children have been weaned (which is subject to the discretion of the medical attendant). They are then sent to situations, mostly as servants and nurses, and the children are sent out to nurse. The children who are weaned previously to applying at the Home for relief are sent out to nurse, as it was found they did as well out as if they had been received into the Home. Unfortunately, out of this class there are a great many brought to the institution in a half-dying condition, the result of passing through a bitter ordeal from the time of the mother being discharged from work-house or hospital (lying-in) to the time of her application at the Home. Hence the high mortality amongst those sent out to nurse. Another reason why the mortality in the Home is lower than outside is because the children are only there a short time—namely, until being weaned. The inmates of the Home are always on the change, it being a sort of probationary place to prepare the mothers for situations, and to provide suitable persons to take the future care of the children.

Statistics are very useful, but exceedingly deceptive, if the general circumstances are not taken into due consideration. When it is remembered that the institution aids the worst cases of distress, wherein want and disease before and after confinement have produced most miserable objects in the form of puny and emaciated infants, it is not surprising that there is a large proportion of deaths amongst the inmates.

Happily, since October, 1869, the mortality has been much lower both in the Home and in the nursing department. In the former, out of 48 infants received and retained in the Home until they were weaned, there have been only three deaths. Of 88 who have been put out to nurse, there have been 12 deaths, one of which was accidental.

Out of 22 that died the year previously, as mentioned by you, one was sent to hospital and died, and a second was

restored to friends, and in the course of time it died also. These two latter experiments having proved unsatisfactory, would you presume the experiment of sending children to hospital, or restoring them to friends, likely to be discontinued? The same with equal force will apply to nursing.

I see both the in- and out-patients, and am fully satisfied more could not be done than is done, not only for the benefit of the child, but also for the welfare of the mother. In conclusion, allow me to remark that the nursing system answers admirably, and that there is no real source of anxiety to the health officer, nor to anyone else who will take the trouble to understand the nature as well as the statistics of the Home.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Hunter-street, Brunswick-square, Sept. 13th, 1870. RICHARD PARAMORE,
Medical Officer.

UTILISATION OF SEWAGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The public interest is excited on the utilisation of sewage, and I fear much that has been done will have to be undone in consequence of the ill-health that it will generate in the cattle, and in man directly and indirectly, by casting either the fluid or the solid in its impure state upon the land, vitiating the grass, and impregnating the air with noxious gases. One of the proper modes of treating it is as follows:—Erect machinery in all large towns; burn the rubbish and the solid night-soil in confined vessels, or otherwise form it into pure carbon, and purify the fluid manure by passing it through the carbon formed by the solid manure.

If you will kindly permit the insertion of this you will oblige an old subscriber: and I have not burdened you, fearing to take too large a space in your columns.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON EVANS, M.R.C.S.
Reading, Sept. 17th, 1870.

SURGICAL NOTES OF THE WAR.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT AT DARMSTADT.)

Sept. 5th, 1870.

MANY appeals have been made through the medium of the English newspapers for surgeons who are willing to proceed to the seat of war, where they are said to be much wanted. Now I can state from personal experience that this is not the case to anything like the extent represented. No one ought to come out to Germany unless he has a perfect colloquial acquaintance with the language, and even then it is extremely doubtful if he will be required, for on the German side they appear to be plentifully supplied with medical attendance. In company with three other medical men sent out by the Prussian Embassy in London, I was sent from Mayence to the head-quarters of the army in the front of Metz, but only to have our services peremptorily declined by Dr. Weber, Medical Inspector-General to the 2nd Army, on the ground that we could not speak German fluently; and if, on returning to Mayence, we had not met from the authorities there with more kindness and appreciation than we did from our professional brother at the front, ere this we should have returned to England without having had charge of a single case. As it is, we have now been nearly three weeks in Germany, and are only now getting into harness. Seemingly we are likely to be settled here till the termination of the war, and as perhaps it might interest the readers of THE LANCET to have from time to time a short account of any interesting cases, and as in a hospital containing over two hundred gunshot wounds there are sure to be many such, I will endeavour to supply this, and anything relating to hospital administration &c. that it may be in my power to mention.

The hospitals here, which are nearly all temporary, make up collectively from six to seven hundred beds, but the number of sick and wounded at present occupying them is not more than four hundred. A large increase may be expected when those wounded in the late battles before Metz arrive. The hospital of the greatest extent is the one situated on what are called the Orangeries, or gardens of the

Grand Duke, and this contains at present between two and three hundred beds. It is supported and managed by the local Hülfs Verein, or Association for the Relief of the Sick and Wounded, of the Ladies' Committee of which H.R.H. the Princess Alice is president; and in her case this is not merely an honorary position. On the contrary, she takes the superintendence of all the work, visiting the hospitals twice a day; indeed, in activity and business-like habits she is an example to all, and that, too, under circumstances in which rest would be quite excusable. The writer had an opportunity of seeing her kindness to the patients, and how much it was appreciated by them in a visit he made to the hospital with her Royal Highness. To her interest are we mainly indebted for the privilege of having under our charge one of the pavilions of the hospital; although in fairness we must state that in this matter Herr Weber, the President, and other members of the Hülfs Verein, have also met us in the most cordial manner.

The buildings devoted to hospital uses are, firstly, two old erections which answered formerly for greenhouses, although built mostly of stone. They are high in the roof, and great efforts have been made to provide for ventilation. Besides being at present overcrowded, they are not so well suited for hospital purposes as the other buildings I am about to mention. These are pavilions, built with wooden roofs, and sides partly wood and partly canvas, and with ample provision for light and ventilation. They possess the advantages besides of containing only sixteen beds each, and of being detached and scattered through the gardens. They are seven in number, and two more are in course of completion. These buildings, if they were built in a little more substantial manner, and consequently more suited for winter weather, would be, to my thinking, the beau ideal of hospital arrangement; and already the German surgeons notice a marked superiority in the results obtained in these tents or barracks, as they are called, compared with those in the permanent buildings. The offices, consisting of kitchen, dead-house, post-mortem room, as well as the operating theatre, are all detached, but are well supplied with every modern appliance; indeed, it is astonishing to see all so well arranged in so short a time, and is only another proof of the great capability of organisation and sense of method inherent in the German mind. The medical staff has at its head Professor Lutter, of Berne, a pupil of Langenbeck, as consulting surgeon, and the other surgeons have each charge of about sixteen beds, all the medical men of the town taking their share. Prof. Lutter has several young Swiss surgeons with him. The nursing is amply provided for, great part being undertaken by the Sisters of Charity, and the rest is under the immediate superintendence of the ladies of the Hülfs Verein. As all is done by voluntary effort, the great thing required is money, and that is the best way in which assistance can be sent from England, for it can procure everything else. If any one should feel inclined to help in that way, I hope he will not forget the English Ward of the Orangeries Hospital at Darmstadt.

And now a word or two as to the patients. In going round the wards one notices that the wounds are nearly all inflicted by shots from the chassépot; some few by the mitrailleuse, but rarely indeed by the shell, those by the latter being usually too severe to allow of the sufferers being brought so far as this. Another thing is the great preponderance of wounds of the extremities, especially of the right elbow and arm, arising from the shot striking when the soldier is in the firing position. Compound fractures of the long bones or their extremities are very common, and in some cases they are extremely comminuted. One case was mentioned where, in excising an elbow, it was necessary to remove thirty-three fragments of bone. The operations mostly required are amputations of both upper and lower extremities, and excisions of joints; that of the elbow very common indeed; that of the knee has been tried three or four times, but does not appear to be in much favour. Then ligature of the arteries is frequently needed for wounds implicating them secondarily. Of course primary cases are treated on the field. The surgeons are extremely conservative in their surgery, making every possible effort to save the limbs of their patients, sometimes perhaps erring on that side. Carbolic acid is used, but only as a lotion, and not after Lister's plan; but I hope to have an opportunity of trying it upon gunshot wounds. Pyæmia is