bution, the recorded rates have to be multiplied by a series of factors, which were published in the Registrar-General's Annual Summary for 1883. The effect of this correction is approximately to raise the recorded rates to what they would severally be if the sex and age-distribution in each town were the same as that which prevailed in the whole of England and Wales at the time of the last census. Thus corrected, the rates of mortality that prevailed in the twenty-eight large English towns during last year, ranged in order from the lowest, were as follows :—

Twenty-eight large towns.	Corrected death-rate.	Death-rate from the principal zymotic diseases.	Twenty-eight large towns.	Corrected death-rate.	Death-rate from the principal zymotic diseases.
Brighton ..	16.6	1.4	Halifax ..	21.1	1.2
Hull ..	16.9	1.2	Wolverhampton	21.3	2.4
Derby ..	17.0	1.8	Newcastle ..	21.8	1.5
Bristol ..	17.5	1.3	Leeds ..	22.0	2.7
Nottingham ..	18.3	2.1	Plymouth ..	22.2	1.8
Sunderland ..	18.8	1.4	Sheffield ..	22.2	3.6
Bradford ..	18.9	1.6	Cardiff ..	22.2	3.0
Birkenhead ..	19.0	1.6	Liverpool ..	22.4	2.5
Birmingham..	19.0	2.0	Oldham ..	22.5	1.9
Leicester ..	19.2	2.5	Salford ..	23.0	3.6
Norwich..	19.3	2.2	Bolton ..	23.7	2.8
Portsmouth ..	19.4	1.7	Blackburn ..	26.0	4.1
London ..	19.6	2.5	Preston ..	26.0	3.1
Huddersfield	20.3	1.5	Manchester ..	29.1	3.2

It will be observed that the effect of this correction does not very materially alter the position of the individual towns, for the same three towns appear at the head of the list, and the same three towns at the bottom of the list, whether the recorded or the corrected rates be used for the purpose. Each of the rates, however, except those for Norwich and Plymouth, are raised in various degrees by the correction; the rates in Norwich and Plymouth are reduced by the correction, because the age and sex proportions of these populations are less favourable to the death-rate than the proportions of the population in the whole of England and Wales. In dealing with the rates of mortality in these large towns, the uncertainty involved in estimating their present populations so long after the last census enumeration should not be lost sight of. It is more than probable that, generally speaking, the population of our large towns has not increased at the same rate as it did between 1871 and 1881, upon which hypothesis the estimates adopted by the Registrar-General are based. This element of uncertainty is recognised by the Registrar-General, who notes in his Weekly Return that, owing to doubtfully accurate estimates of population, the death-rates of Leicester, Salford, and Bradford (to which may probably be added Bristol and some others) are understated, while those of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Cardiff are probably overstated. This disturbing element will not, however, explain the noteworthy fact that the whole of the seven Lancashire towns appear at the bottom of the above list, or the excessively high rates in Blackburn, Preston, and Manchester. The last-mentioned two towns have appeared at the bottom of the list for each of the last five years. It is shown in the above table that the zymotic death-rate in these towns last year, although it did not follow precisely the order of the death-rate from all causes, maintained a general agreement therewith; it ranged from 1.2 and 1.3 in Hull and Bristol, to 3.6 in Sheffield and Salford and 4.1 in Blackburn. The general improvement in the health of these towns, which has been so marked in recent years, was still more striking in 1888; the reduction in the zymotic death-rate was, however, in some measure due to the low death-rate from infantile diarrhoea, caused by low temperature and abundant rain during last summer.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY WINTER EXHIBITION.

THE usual Winter Exhibition at Burlington House was opened to the public on Monday last. This year, however, the old masters are very much in a minority. There is not a single Italian picture, Spain and Germany are unrepresented, and no work earlier than the seventeenth

century is shown. There is a magnificent series of Rembrandts, and a collection of French pictures of the last century by Watteau and Lancret, interesting from their comparative novelty as well as their merits.

It is consequently on deceased masters of the British school that the Academy mainly depends. There are some fine Romneys and Gainsboroughs, but even here most works are of a later date than those usually shown in this Exhibition. The water-colour room is again filled with Turner's work, chiefly with a series of fifty drawings on grey paper done on the Rhine in a fortnight in 1819. Leslie and Etty and Egg are the chief representatives of the later period, but the selection hardly does these artists justice.

So far the Exhibition is below the average, but it is chiefly in the last two rooms that the public will be found, before the pictures of the late Mr. Frank Holl. It is hard to realise that the hundred and eighty portraits, of which thirty are here exhibited, were all executed within the last twelve years, a period which won for the painter a place among the greatest names of English art, the security of which this collection definitely affirms. There are also twenty-four subject pictures by the artist, most of which, however, date before 1878, the turning point of his career, the year when he seems first to have gained the power of adequately expressing himself. It is to be regretted that the portrait of Mr. Samuel Cousins—his epoch-making portrait—is not here; neither is that of Sir William Jenner, perhaps his last and greatest achievement. But the portrait of Earl Spencer, which divided the honours with the last picture, is exhibited, and so are the likenesses of Sir George Trevelyan and Lord Dufferin, the Duke of Cleveland and Vice-Chancellor Bacon. Of course, Mr. Holl's range was limited; sprightliness and charm were not his, nor was he a born colourist. But he had all the qualities necessary to render the English gentleman of his own day. He had directness and insight, he was not monotonous, and his appreciation of subtlety was increasing (notice the hands of all his portraits, all characteristic and all different); he was original, and he was essentially English. Thus, dying at forty-three, he is one more of those early losses of which English art has had so many, and a loss which there is no one exactly to make good.

New Inventions.

MIDWIFERY FORCEPS.

I AM desirous of bringing to the notice of the profession the instrument here illustrated. The forceps is a long one, with cradle hinges folding on the handles, admirably adapted for pocket use, measuring in length 8½ in. by 3½ in. I have adopted rings instead of crutches. During traction the handles are kept in apposition by a winged screw, obviating the necessity of using tape. I have had inserted into one of the handles an instrument for rupturing the membranes,

which I hope on some occasions may be found serviceable. A portable forceps must certainly prove a boon, at least to the country practitioner, who has, no doubt, like myself, found himself seated, perhaps, on a restive horse, with a long forceps dangling against its sides, on a dark night and on a dangerous road. Messrs. Arnold and Sons are the makers of the forceps.

JOHN NOBLE BREDIN, L.K.Q.C.P.I., &c.

Norton Folgate, London, E.

MEDICAL MAGISTRATE. — Mr. Henry Barnes, M.D. Edin., M.R.C.S. Eng., of Carlisle, has been added to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Cumberland.