have numerous persons of unsound mind left at large for one error in procedure to take place.

On June 28th last you did me the honour to insert a letter, in which I discussed this evil from a social, statistical, medical, and legal point of view, with particular reference to suicidal deaths, and your leading article of the 30th inst. once more directed attention pointedly to the alarmingly increasing number of suicides. These do not appear to be confined to any particular class of society, as reference to the following instances extracted from The Times of the last few days will show, and some of them seem all the more deplorable because the exercise of unfeathered medical skill, combined with prudent care and forethought, would assuredly have acted as a check on the fatal tendency. Sept. 1st, C. C. drowned himself in the Thames; Sept. 11th, M. A. M. cut his throat; Sept. 13th, H. W. poisoned himself; Sept. 15th, G. D. drowned himself in a duck pond; Sept. 16th, A. W. C. strangled himself with a leather strap; Sept. 17th, F. W. drowned himself in Hampstead Ponds; Sept. 17th, M. A. M. drowned himself in a tank at the rear of a house; Sept. 18th, P. C. smashed his skull by springing over a staircase; Sept. 18th, F. M. shot himself; Sept. 20th, F. C. cut his throat.

There is little doubt that in the majority of these, and other cases of suicide, the fatal act was induced by an existing condition of melancholia or other form of brain disturbance, which manifested itself even under the proper care or passive, accompanied by delusion or hallucination, or otherwise; but still the well-recognised mentally diseased but easily curable condition in the early stages, "melancholia," in which the aspect of everything to the unfortunate sufferer becomes as it never was to him before—completely changed—and life under this infliction becoming "flat, stale, or passive, accompanied by delusion or hallucination, or otherwise; and he tells us that "there were cases of cholera in Marseilles during the last autumn"; and he at the same time throws some side-light on its prevention for, "cholera leaking out. This tendency, perhaps, is not the sole universal cause, but in some parts of the city, as to the quality of the water. It was stated by numerous correspondents in the newspapers that the water was turbid and ill-smelling, particularly after being boiled, and there certainly seems to have been some foundation for these complaints; but it was apparently the water from one reservoir in particular that was chiefly at fault, the cause of it being, not any unusual contamination, but the low water-level. A deep cistern was formed at the bottom of a large deposit situated on the outskirts of the town, where elaborate works and machinery were in operation for converting it into a marketable substance, the rainwater and other refuse of the city to a large depot situate on the outskirts of the city, which had been attended with a very large measure of success. But to remove the enormous mass of material constantly and quickly from so large a population as this necessitated the employment of a large number of wagons to convey the contents of the cisterns to the works; and to this end, constructed pans, with tightly fitting lids, and waggon-crews especially built for the purpose of holding these, are in use, and hitherto have not given rise to much annoyance, but lately the papers have teemed with complaints of the nuisance arising from these carts in passing through the streets and from the removal of the pans during the daytime, and it has been suggested that the work should be done at night instead of day. But, although the pans were set aside with a sudden frenzy for the imposition of rigorous and iriscome, but futile, quarantine on all arrivals from the far East, on account of the prevalence of cholera in Bombay and Egypt. This French war-ship had, albeit, come from Tunis, where she

had been actively engaged in operations, but this, and other uninvited facts or items of intelligence, were carefully kept in the dark from eagerly inquiring "special" and "own" correspondents of the English press.

Now, whether the comma bacillus of Koch and others be, for one error in procedure to take place. First, the water-supply appeared to be getting within measurable distance of real success. But to remove the enormous mass of material constantly and quickly from so large a population as this necessitated the employment of a large number of wagons to convey the contents of the cisterns to the works; and to this end, constructed pans, with tightly fitting lids, and waggons especially built for the purpose of holding these, are in use, and hitherto have not given rise to much annoyance, but lately the papers have teemed with complaints of the nuisance arising from these carts in passing through the streets and from the removal of the pans during the daytime, and it has been suggested that the work should be done at night instead of day. But, although the pans were set aside with a sudden frenzy for the imposition of rigorous and iriscome, but futile, quarantine on all arrivals from the far East, on account of the prevalence of cholera in Bombay and Egypt. This French war-ship had, albeit, come from Tunis, where she

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CHOLERA IN MARSEILLES.—MANCHESTER.

[Sept. 27, 1884.

To the Editor of The Lancet.

Sir,—I noticed a letter in your issue of the 20th inst. from Dr. Drysdale, an officer de santé of Meutone, in which he tells us that "there were cases of cholera in Marseilles last autumn"; and be at the same time throws some side-light on the system of supressio verbi, which appears to have been in vogue to prevent the fact of the existence of Asiatic cholera leaking out. This tendency, perhaps, is not the sole privilege of Marseilles. However that may be, the following information, gleaned from a conversation I had the other day with a French naval officer who was a fellow-traveller with me on the Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles Railway, might, I venture to think, tend to prove suggestive. He told me, and very frankly, that there were cases of undoubted cholera early this year, at a time, I might recall attention to the early autumn; and he at the same time throws some side-light on its prevention for, "cholera leaking out. This tendency, perhaps, is not the sole privilege of Marseilles. However that may be, the following information, gleaned from a conversation I had the other day with a French naval officer who was a fellow-traveller with me on the Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles Railway, might, I venture to think, tend to prove suggestive. He told me, and very frankly, that there were cases of undoubted cholera early this year, at a time, I might recall attention to the