gentlemen should have been invited, (as would have been done in the French Academy of Medicine,) to submit the facts which they proposed to exhibit to a competent committee, who would report on the subject submitted. In place of which we find one gentleman "collecting cobwebs," or "scraping broken and dirty glass" in St. Giles's, and "we ourselves," hoping that we shall not be thought "unreasonable in having expected that they [the cholera fungi] might be discovered in the cisterns of houses and public institutions in which cholera had prevailed severely, although it had ceased there for some days or weeks."

THE CHELTENHAM BOARD OF GUARDIANS AND THEIR LATE MEDICAL OFFICER.

WE reported in THE LANCET of Sept. 22nd, the proceedings which took place at the Cheltenham County Court, with reference to a claim made by Mr. FREDERICK HYETT, of £13 1s. 6d. for medical attendance, against the guardians of the Cheltenham Union. It will be recollected that the professional gentleman who then represented the guardians, took an objection to the jurisdiction of the District Judge, Mr. FRANCILLON, on the ground that as a justice of the peace for the county, he is, *ex officio*, a poor-law guardian, and hence one of the defendants in the cause. His Honour, notwithstanding, determined to take upon himself the responsibility of trying the case. On that occasion, by mutual agreement, it was adjourned until Tuesday last. On that day, when the case was called on, the attorney for the defendants announced that he had made application, on the 19th instant, to a judge in chambers, Mr. JUSTICE TALFOURD, for a writ of *certiorari* to move the cause into a superior court, grounding his application on affidavits having reference to the position of Mr. Francillon. A writ was then ordered to issue, provided the defendants agreed to pay, within a fortnight, the plaintiff's preliminary costs in the county court, &c. A copy of this order it appears, had been served on Mr. Francillon.

On Tuesday, his Honour said such an order was not at all binding on him, because it was not directed to him, and, in reality, no writ had as yet been issued. Hence, if the plaintiff's attorney insisted upon it, he should hesitate before he refused to try the cause. As it was, however, the order of Justice Talfourd should be treated with every respect.

Mr. PRUEN, for the plaintiff, then asked his Honour to let the case stand adjourned for another month, to allow time for the defendants to pay him his costs, and re-consider their proceedings in the matter at issue. This was agreed to. The case now stands thus:—If the writ of *certiorari* is issued, the cause will be tried at the Gloucestershire Assizes in March next, and should the plaintiff get a verdict, the parish of Cheltenham will be involved in nearly one hundred pounds expenses in defending an action for a fair claim of £13. What the ratepayers will say to this proceeding on the part of the guardians remains to be seen. It is also expected that the district auditor will refuse to pass such law charges.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

ASIATIC CHOLERA: DEATHS FROM RELIANCE ON NEWSPAPER NOSTRUMS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If every medical man who has treated Asiatic cholera would take the trouble to state how many of his patients he has found in the stage of collapse when first seen by him, and give the history of the mode of treatment adopted before his arrival, it would be shown that many hundreds of lives have been sacrificed by reliance on newspaper nostrums, or upon medicines administered by unqualified persons.

I would strongly recommend medical men, whilst such cases are fresh in their memories, to commit them to paper; for a time may come when they may be called upon to forward them to a certain body, with a view to put the public on their guard for the future, should the dreadful scourge again visit our island.

The writer of this article was called upon in September to visit a patient who had had violent diarrhoea for four days.

When seen he was found in the stage of collapse, was removed to a hospital, and died within seven hours of his admission. The poor man had relied solely on half a drachm of tincture of catechu and five drops of laudanum, taken three times a day. The prescription had been copied from a penny publication. He was the father of nine children, many of them of tender age, who, with their mother, were left to mourn his loss.

A poor man, a carpenter, living alone, was found by his son-in-law, at an accidental call, so ill with purging and vomiting, that he was induced, suspecting the nature of the malady, to seek for medical aid. This case was sent to the hospital, and in nine hours the poor man breathed his last. It was proved that he had called upon and sent to a druggist for medicine during the premonitory stage.

The next was one of almost entire neglect; the only remedy resorted to was brandy. A man, of forty-five; he also was sent to the hospital, and died within four hours from the time he was first seen, leaving a wife and child.

The last that will be here narrated was that of a servant girl, who had suffered with diarrhoea unchecked for four days. She had taken only brandy, not wishing to be thought ill. When first seen she was passing rice-coloured evacuations, was sick, and fast approaching the stage of collapse. She also was removed to the Middlesex Hospital, "just in time," as Mr. Corfe declared, "to test the mode of treatment adopted there." With constant medical attention night and day, and due attendance from the nurses, she recovered, but not without consecutive fever of an alarming character.

I was one day asked if "Sir James Clarke's" remedy (?) was not an excellent one for cholera. I replied, that it was one replete with danger, and that Sir James had repudiated it. A bottle was shown me, containing the medicine, which, but for my timely call, would have been administered to a little girl twelve years of age. The bottle with its contents were thrown into the street, and my advice asked. On the very day this occurred, an inquest was held on a female who had died from taking the same kind of medicine, which was reported in *The Times* of the following day, and shown to me by the father of my patient, with this expression—"I shall ever have to thank your timely call for the salvation of my daughter's life."

How many medical men could, if they would, narrate such cases as mine. Is it not a duty they owe themselves and the too confiding public to do so? Shall quackery and puff continue to slay mankind, and we remain silent? One voice in the matter is like a child breathing on a sail to set a windmill in motion. As the Royal Humane Society cause printed boards to be placed where skaters may find a watery grave, so ought those who know how life has been sacrificed in other respects, to point out the path where danger lies.

I beg therefore to call upon all medical men who may have observed as I have done, to be prepared with brief narratives of maltreated and neglected cases.

The public, at present, wonder why so many have died of Asiatic cholera, and why, when medical aid is obtained, life cannot be spared. They do not consider, that when the medical man arrives patients are often found dying; and will scarcely believe when told that life might have been saved if the patient had been earlier seen, and properly attended.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

Oct. 29, 1849.

VERAX.

ANIMALCULAR CHARACTER OF THE ORGANIC BODIES DISCOVERED IN CHOLERA PATIENTS. MODES OF ACTION OF CALOMEL AND SALT IN CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the month of August, 1848, you did me the honour to notice, in favourable terms, my "Discourse on the Asiatic Cholera," which I wrote during the latter part of the preceding year, (1847.) Your reviewer did not coincide with me in the process of reasoning which induced me to refer the specific cause of malignant cholera to some unusual and irregular distribution, through the medium of the atmosphere, of certain minute organic structures.

In the brochure alluded to, I ventured to offer it as my opinion, that some such bodies might be found to exist, and prove to be of an animalcular kind. The consideration, of all others, which led me to entertain such a belief, was the otherwise unaccountable caprice evinced by the pestilence whilst pursuing its destructive career across the globe,—often, for instance, selecting for its ravages very circumscribed pots or districts, whilst localities immediately adjoining them altogether escaped its baneful influence.

An able writer in the *Times* (Oct. 5, 1849) has gone so far as to apply the term entozoa to the so-called "fungoid" bodies recently discovered in the matters ejected from the stomach and intestines of those suffering from the disease, and also in the air of infected places. Drs. Brittan and Budd, however, content themselves by assigning to the microscopic objects which they have discovered the rather ambiguous denomination of "annular organisms."

When we reflect upon the rapidly multiplying and migratory character of these bodies, does it not seem much more probable that they are in reality endowed with an infusorial or animalcular vitality, rather than with one of a fungoid or mere vegetative kind? At all events, if the views of Drs. Budd and Brittan are found to be correct and universal, with regard to the specific cause of the pestilence, my theory, announced nearly two years since, was not so chimerical as might at first sight have appeared.

I cannot omit the present opportunity to observe, that the well-known advantages of the saline treatment, in epidemic cholera, may in a great measure depend upon the property which common salt possesses of destroying a considerable section of insect life, whether within or without the living body. The anthelmintic properties of muriate of soda, and its beneficial effect in removing intestinal entozoa, I have myself clearly ascertained. Nay, more; salt has been found equally efficacious in preserving organized substances from the ravages of fungi; so that whether the pestilence depends upon the invasion of fungoid or animalcular parasites, its expediency is equally obvious, regarded either as a therapeutic or protective agent.

Lastly, it is more than probable that the acknowledged good effects of calomel, largely administered at the onset, in cutting short the disease, may be partially owing to the devitalizing power which this valuable remedy exerts over the "hæmodic corpuscles."—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Leamington Spa, Oct. 15, 1849.

T. HENRY STORR, M.D.

THE CHOLERA AT HULL.

STRICTURES ON THE LETTER OF DR. SANDWITH; AND AN OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE NUMBER AND RESULTS OF THE CASES TREATED BY THE MEDICAL STAFF OF DR. AYRE, WITH SMALL AND FREQUENTLY-REPEATED DOSES OF CALOMEL.

[LETTER FROM DR. AYRE.]

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The only answer which I deem it fitting to give to Dr. Sandwith's letter, published in your last week's *LANCET*, is the assurance, that whenever he shall think proper to notice any writings of mine, and shall ascertain facts before making his statements, and shall also resist the temptation he has at this time too readily yielded to, of imputing discreditable motives, I shall, if they need it, reply to his observations, and with all the courtesy and kindness which are due from one gentleman to another when engaged in searching after truth.

You must at present allow me, Mr. Editor, to say, for the information of the profession, (and for the truth of which my colleagues will bear me witness,) that I used whatever influence I possessed with the authorities to make the medical staff efficient; and it was efficient until the moment when the numbers attacked became suddenly greatly increased, and the malignancy of the disease most terrific; yet at no period was any applicant for medical aid neglected, for what the staff for a brief period fell short of in number, it amply made up in zeal and intelligence. It is also to be borne in mind, that among the advantages of the small-dose-calomel treatment, is the speedy convalescence of the patients, not often exceeding twelve or twenty-four hours after commencing the treatment of collapse; and though demanding frequent visits in the disease, they require but little attention afterwards. Under these circumstances, respecting the comparatively short attendance of patients in the collapse of cholera when rightly treated, and with the knowledge derived from experience of the disease in 1832, that no other treatment is available in collapse, and that all others, in fact, were either useless or pernicious, it could never be my wish, or be expected of me, that I should press for the election of parties to be my colleagues, who were obstinately opposed to my treatment, and who employed opiates and stimulants to a degree that I had often had occasion to deplore, and who, while thus prescribing and indulging even in an eagerness to attend and prescribe, proclaimed themselves ignorant of what was useful in the treatment which they followed.

I am extending this letter beyond the limits intended, yet I cannot close it without adverting to what appeared, some

weeks since in THE LANCET, and what I should have still left unheeded, had it not been repeated by Dr. Sandwith—namely, that whatever credit may be accorded to me for originating the treatment of cholera by small doses of calomel, that the honour was shared with me by the late Dr. Peacock, of Darlington. Had, however, your two correspondents taken the most ordinary pains to learn the truth, they would have found that my visit to Sunderland and Newcastle was in 1831, when the practice then began; and the cholera did not appear in Darlington until towards the end of 1832, and several months after I had sent more than one communication to THE LANCET on the subject of the treatment.

I hasten, however, to conclude, and not without some misgivings at thus obtruding on the notice of your readers a matter so purely personal to myself; but with a request that you will give a place in your columns to the subjoined report.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

Hull, Oct. 26, 1849.

JOSEPH AYRE, M.D.

To the Governor, Deputy Governor, Assistants, and Guardians of the Poor in the town of Kingston-upon-Hull, and to their Sanitary Committee acting in the united parishes of the Holy Trinity and St. Mary.

Having had the honour, in July last, when the malignant cholera first appeared amongst us, to be chosen physician to your board, and associated with three other medical gentlemen, whom you also elected to attend upon the poor of your two parishes, and having subsequently become, through your favour, the medical superintendent under the direction of the Board of Health, with twelve other medical officers added to the staff, I now feel it to be my duty, in compliance with your desire, and with the disease now mercifully removed from us, to render to you an account of our labours, and the amount of success which has attended them.

In proceeding to give this report, I need scarcely remind you that six district surgeons attended to the patients through the day, whilst six others were occupied in house-to-house visitings, and three more were stationed throughout the night at the public dispensary, to visit all who might need their assistance. The disease prevailed during three months, being less in duration by two months than it was in 1832; but what it wanted in the length of its continuance, it unhappily made up in its almost unsurpassable malignancy, and especially in the early, and still more in the middle, period of its prevalence. In the following table will be seen the number of patients, and the results of the treatment employed for them, and it is with no inconsiderable degree of just pride, and with yet greater thankfulness, that I bring them under your notice. Of the cases here given, it is to be understood that those of cholera were in full collapse when they came under treatment, and those in the premonitory stage were entering into that state; whilst of the diarrhoea cases, the patients were in that threatening condition which almost constantly precedes and leads into the full disease.

Cases of diarrhoea attended by the six	1430
house-visitors	
Ditto, by the six district-surgeons	608
Ditto, at the dispensaries	868
Ditto of cholera in full collapse	725
Ditto of impending collapse	133
	3764
Deaths from diarrhoea	6
Ditto from collapse	355
	361
Recoveries	3403

Such, then, gentlemen, as above given, are the numbers of the patients whom we had under treatment, and such are the results of it. And here I might close this report, content with the facts it exhibits, were it not for the peculiar and trying circumstances under which I have been placed by a party in this town, some of whom—at the same time that they proclaimed themselves "to be at sea" in the method of treatment, declined, not only all trial of mine, though recommended to them by numerous correspondents in the public journals, and by others—publicly denounced it as injurious and even "murderous." It is therefore in the performance of a duty imposed on me, and which I owe not more to myself than to you and to my professional brethren at a distance, that I now bring under your notice the return made by the registrar-general of the number of deaths which took place in the two parishes where our attendance was given; and from which it will be seen, that notwithstanding the very large proportion of the labouring classes that came under our care, the deaths that occurred with us were 371;