years with an embodied regiment—a law obviously framed with the view of guarding against the contingency of the surgeons being put on half-pay; for no one supposes that the militia will be embodied for so long a period. To secure the services of efficient men, in the event of the regiment being ordered abroad, or removed from the district in which it was raised, not only should the surgeon's daily pay be augmented, but he should be entitled to half-pay after serving for three years.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Dumfries, July, 1855. J. G., Militia Surgeon.

IS CIDER A PROPHYLACTIC AGAINST CHOLERA?

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having reason to believe that good *fermented* cider is a prophylactic against cholera, I should feel greatly obliged if any one of your readers, who has attended a case of cholera in such a cider-drinking patient, will kindly inform me of the circumstance, either through the medium of THE LANCET, or by private communication. No such case has as yet come to my knowledge.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
38, Berners-street, July, 1855. J. H. TUCKER.

THE STATE OF THE THAMES—THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND THE CHOLERA.

[THE following very important letter has been addressed to *The Times* by the justly-celebrated Mr. FARADAY:—]

SIR,—I traversed this day, by steamboat, the space between London and Hungerford Bridges, between half-past one and two o'clock; it was low water, and I think the tide must have been near the turn. The appearance and the smell of the water forced themselves at once on my attention. The whole of the river was an opaque pale-brown fluid. In order to test the degree of opacity, I tore up some white cards into pieces, moistened them so as to make them sink easily below the surface, and then dropped some of these pieces into the water at every pier the boat came to. Before they had sunk an inch below the surface, they were indistinguishable, though the sun shone brightly at the time; and when the pieces fell edgewise, the lower part was hidden from sight before the upper part was under water. This happened at St. Paul's-wharf, Blackfriars-bridge, Temple-wharf, Southwark-bridge, and Hungerford, and I have no doubt would have occurred further up and down the river. Near the bridges, the feculence rolled up in clouds so dense that they were visible at the surface, even in water of this kind.

The smell was very bad, and common to the whole of the water; it was the same as that which now comes up from the gullyholes in the streets; the whole river was for the time a real sewer. Having just returned from out of the country air, I was, perhaps, more affected by it than others; but I do not think I could have gone on to Lambeth or Chelsea, and I was glad to enter the streets for an atmosphere which, except near the sink-holes, I found much sweeter than that on the river.

I have thought it a duty to record these facts, that they may be brought to the attention of those who exercise power, or have responsibility, in relation to the condition of our river. There is nothing figurative in the words I have employed, or any approach to exaggeration; they are the simple truth. If there be sufficient authority to remove a putrescent pond from the neighbourhood of a few simple dwellings, surely the river which flows for so many miles through London ought not to be allowed to become a fermenting sewer. The condition in which I saw the Thames may perhaps be considered as exceptional, but it ought to be an impossible state, instead of which I fear it is rapidly becoming the general condition. If we neglect this subject, we cannot expect to do so with impunity; nor ought we to be surprised if, ere many years are over, a hot season give us sad proof of the folly of our carelessness.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Royal Institution, July 7th. M. FARADAY.

NEW HOSPITAL IN THE EAST.—“Galignani” publishes a Turin letter, stating that the King of the Two Sicilies has signified his consent to Sir W. Temple, that an Hospital for Convalescents from the East should be established on the Island of Ischia, where it is known the mineral springs possess rare powers in the cure of ague and rheumatism, and the air is particularly pure.

SURGERY OF THE WAR.

HEAD-QUARTER CAMP, BEFORE SEBASTOPOL,
June 26th, 1855.

THE accompanying Weekly Return of Sick and Wounded, it is to be regretted, exhibits considerable increase of both admissions and deaths, arising chiefly from the accidents of war, occasioned by the assault of the 18th inst. on the Redan battery and the works in the Dockyard creek. Many of the injuries received were occasioned by grape-shot, fired at short range, and were of a very serious nature. The loss, consequently, has been heavy, but it was very satisfactory to know that prompt aid was afforded to all. The action having taken place within a short distance of the fixed Hospital establishments, accommodation was provided for the wounded at once. This is an advantage rarely attainable on active service in the field, so that they were placed under as favourable circumstances as could be expected. The amount of mortality, therefore, amongst them is mainly attributable to the severity of their wounds and not to any want of surgical aid or hospital accommodation, as both were at hand. Nor was there occasion to remove the more seriously wounded when once they were brought in; and the cases selected to be sent down to the surgical hospital at Balaklava were of a nature not likely to be injured by the journey, and it is reported that they are nearly all progressing in a most satisfactory manner. Indeed, they have done so well, that it is matter of regret that the accommodation at the Castle, Balaklava, is not more extensive; but, unfortunately, the ground will not admit of its being enlarged.

The hospital now in course of erection on the high, bold promontory near the monastery of St. George will soon be ready for the reception of patients, and, so far as position is concerned, it is considered they will be placed under as favourable circumstances as can possibly be obtained. The situation is high and dry, overlooking the sea, and subject to no malarious influence that can be discovered; and, whatever the result may be on trial, the site is admitted by all who have seen it to be unexceptionable.

Cholera and bowel complaints still prevail, and have been on the increase within the last two or three days; but neither the admissions nor deaths have been so marked as to attract special attention, though numerous enough to create uneasiness. Last week the admissions from diarrhoea were 762, deaths 6; from cholera admissions 198, deaths 118. This week the admissions from diarrhoea 940, deaths 10; admissions from cholera 277, deaths 140. Last week the admissions from fever were 490, deaths 30; this week the admissions have been 614, deaths 28.

Taking the whole force, the admissions to strength during the week have been in the ratio of 10·52 per cent., which is very high, but the deaths to strength are in the ratio of 0·68 per cent, which is more moderate; but it must be borne in mind that 1659 of the admissions during the week were from wounds alone.

The Artillery and First Division have suffered most from cholera during the week. It has attacked the newly arrived batteries and regiments, though placed in the most favourable positions.

The Artillery, in particular, are encamped on ground that is in every respect unexceptionable, and it is difficult to trace the rise and progress of this malady amongst them with anything like satisfaction. New comers seem to be most liable to attacks of the disease, and this applies to all. The Sardinian contingent, for instance, has suffered much more than the British troops have done since the epidemic first made its appearance at the end of April. Great attention is paid to the cleanliness of the different camps, and on the first appearance of cholera the attention of medical officers was drawn, in a circular memorandum, dated the 30th of April, to the great importance of detecting and arresting the premonitory diarrhoea, which generally precedes the more formidable stage of the disease.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, JULY 9TH.

STATE OF THE RIVER THAMES.

Mr. WALTER rose to put a question to the right hon. baronet the President of the Board of Health upon a subject of vital importance to the inhabitants of London—namely, the impure and pestiferous state of the river Thames. A letter from Professor Faraday appeared in *The Times* of that morning,