Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

THE CHOLERA CASES IN LONDON.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I forward a brief account of two cases of Asiatic cholera which have just come under my notice. I trust the importance of the subject will be a sufficient apology for encroaching on your valuable space.

On Monday, 28th inst., at 7 A.M., I was hastily summoned to a lodging-house in this neighbourhood to see a man who it was stated was dying. On my arrival I found the house crowded with Danish emigrants who had disembarked that very morning. I was subsequently informed they are on their way to New Zealand. The man, a labourer aged about 45, was lying on a bench seemingly in great agony. The features were pinched and the hands firmly contracted. The surface of the body was icy cold and covered with a clammy perspiration; pulse imperceptible; vomiting incessant; no abdominal tenderness; pain referred to the transverse colon. He was at once conveyed to bed. Large mustard plasters applied to stomach and hot water to feet. Chlorodyne and brandy administered. Shortly after I was enabled to examine the stools, which presented the characteristic rice-water appearance.

Whilst attending to the man I was informed that a little girl aged nine (and who till within the last few minutes had been playing with her companions) was suddenly seized with symptoms of a similar character. On going down stairs I found her lying on the floor in a state of collapse, with her legs drawn up, and evidently suffering from violent colicky pains. She was taken upstairs and the same treatment adopted.

I was then obliged to leave. On my return I found a considerable amelioration in the man. The pain had subsided with the exception of cramps in the legs, which came on every now and then. He was now principally tormented with thirst, which no amount of liquid seemed to quench. Pulse risen, and warmth in some measure restored. Temp. 94°. Bark and ammonia prescribed. Since then he has been progressing most favourably.

The girl grew rapidly worse. In a short time the body became perfectly cold; the hands contracted, the finger nails assuming a bluish tinge; temp. 93°. In this case there was no vomiting and very little diarrhoea. The colicky pains which marked the outset of the disease had apparently subsided, and with the exception of slight moaning there was no expression of suffering. The pulse gradually became imperceptible, and she finally expired at 2.30 P.M., seven and a half hours after the first seizure.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Minories, July 29, 1873.

RICHARD HOLT, M.D.

P.S.—I sent a report of the case to the medical officers of the Privy Council. These gentlemen called upon me this morning and are now engaged in investigating the case.

DR. PARKES'S MANUAL OF HYGIENE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The very kind notification in last week's LANCET of the issue of the fourth edition of my Manual of Hygiene encourages me to hope you will allow me a few lines to correct an error at page 641. The deaths from cholera in 1867 at Umballa (lines 12 to 16) are wrongly given: they should be—21st Hussars, 2; 94th Regt., 18; Battery R.H.A., none; Battery R.H.A., 1. The numbers were taken from Dr. Bryden's elaborate tables in his work entitled "Vital Statistics of the Bengal Presidency," a work alike admirable for the industry with which the statistics are collected and for the skill with which they are arranged. After much study of this large book, I can truly say I have hardly ever seen one so free from errors. Unfortunately, however, the sixteenth table of the year 1867 has in some way been wrongly folded, and two pages have been transposed. In copying the numbers I did not notice this displacement, which I ought to have done, as it is quite obvious, and

hence the mistake which I now ask you to allow me to rectify. I have cancelled the page in all the copies not yet bound, and have altered it in ink in the copies bound but not sold. A large number (unfortunately as regards this point) have been sold, and, as the error is an important one, I ask to have the advantage of your large circulation to notify the true numbers to those who have already purchased the work.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

Royal Victoria Hospital, Netley,
July, 1873.

E. A. PARKES.

EXTRA-UTERINE FETATION.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson, being deservedly an authority on all matters relating to ovariectomy, can scarcely say anything regarding the operation which is not likely to carry weight and to be well founded. I should be glad, therefore, if you would allow me to ask him why, in the case published by him in last Saturday's LANCET, when there were all the indications of severe inflammatory action, after tapping what he believed was an ovarian tumour, he did not make an attempt to remove that tumour immediately on the accession of the serious symptoms. To me it seems that the removal of a cyst in which suppuration has been induced, or which has excited peritonitis, is the accepted practice, and I am sure all ovariectomists would be glad to know if Mr. Hutchinson has any ground of objection to it.

In Mr. Hutchinson's case I do not think anyone could have made a more accurate diagnosis, unless the tapping had been completed and the pelvis subsequently examined, as is usually done after exploratory tapplings. But I think it is much to be regretted that Mr. Hutchinson should lend his authoritative support to the do-nothing treatment of so risky a condition as extra-uterine gestation, the more so as all authors since 1860 have advocated just the opposite course, and the performance of the operation on the principles laid down by Kœberlé reduces its risks to within the ordinary mortality of simple abdominal section. All the four cases already published where Kœberlé's practice has been followed have been successful, and the statistics given by Mr. Hutchinson of recovery after discharge of the foetus by suppuration give about as accurate an idea of the number who have not so recovered as would an inspection of the Army List of 1817 tell us how many men had previously fallen in the Continental wars in which we had been engaged.

I further wish Mr. Hutchinson would tell us on what grounds he regards his case as one of tubal pregnancy which had advanced to the full time. "The uterus was pushed over to the right side and was in close connexion with the walls of the cyst; the left Fallopian tube could be traced for a short distance on the front of the cyst, where it became thinned out and lost," are facts which seem to me to show that his case was one of the ordinary kind—namely, the result of the rupture of the tube at an early stage of pregnancy, when it was really a Fallopian pregnancy, and the subsequent development of the ovum in the retro-uterine cul-de-sac. I have satisfied myself that not a single instance of the so-called Fallopian pregnancies at the full term, recorded in literature to which I have access, really deserves the name.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Birmingham, July 22, 1873.

LAWSON TAIT.

VACCINATION AWARDS OR GRANTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Your journal has of late teemed with correspondence on the above head, and no subject requires more ventilation, nor any Act more reformation, than the Vaccination Act, especially as regards the medical men, who, in this, as in most other matters, is made the stalking-horse, or only man called upon to do something for nothing, or a good deal for a little.

Perhaps in a sanitary and national point of view the Act is more efficient than heretofore, but it puts an extra strain upon the medical officer, who, *volens volens*, is con-

strained to violate his contract with the guardians, because an unrepealed Act enacts that every child shall be vaccinated within three months of age, while (as may be plainly seen in my consulting-room, boldly printed bills circulated also by both boards of guardians) I am covenanted to attend at the respective stations (the surgery being one) twice a year—April and October,—whereas I am virtually compelled to vaccinate out of time, by the constant and almost daily presentation of summonses by mothers who come from two miles and a half to four miles to have their children “wassinated,” the summonses having been served upon them by the newly imported inspector, who is made thus vigilant from the simple fact, as I find, that he is paid 1s. 6d. for every case he sends for me to vaccinate at the liberal and uniform prices of 2s. 6d. in one union and 3s. in the other, three-fourths of those at the first price being four miles from my house, and which, except in the delinquencies referred to (and brought to light by the inspector’s notice of summons) are done at the station. This, I think, obviously clears up the absolute impossibility for us to serve two masters.

Then comes the question of “defectively kept registers” and the awards. I take my case to be more or less identical with your correspondents, “R. S. P. T.,” “R. Q.,” “Public Vaccinator,” and “W.” of this day. And it runs thus:—In July, 1868, I received grants for both my districts, and I must say I expected the same this year, inasmuch as, well and closely as my cases were up then, they have been even more so since, and to the present time.

The inspector, in December last (although he came at a most unfortunately busy time: four o’clock on a short day), examined my books, and caused me, at considerable inconvenience, to drum up from a large straggling village some children for inspection, complimented me thereupon both as to “quality and quantity,” but laid some stress upon a certain column in the register being blank.

After waiting some months, reading now and then that Mr. A. B. C. D. and others had received grants, I determined to write to the Local Government Board to inquire the reason it was withheld from me, to which I received reply as follows—viz., “Because the Board’s inspector reported that your vaccination registers had been defectively kept and you had failed [a gratuity on his part] to attend regularly at the appointed stations at the times specified in your contracts, the Board found themselves unable to make you an award in respect of vaccination.”

Now, Sir, as to the objection of having “failed to attend,” &c., I think I have explained this above; and as to the “defectively-kept register,” &c., I find this is constituted or refers to column 8, as to the genealogy of the vaccine. This I hold to be obviously and monstrously absurd. I told the inspector so, I wrote the Local Government Board so, and now repeat what I then wrote, that anyone *pretending* to fill up this column must necessarily render doubtful and very unreliable information. We know it must be so, in the country especially, from the simple fact that we are constantly exchanging and receiving points by dozens from our neighbouring fraternity, mixed and of course taken from different subjects.

I am so certain of this that, as an honest man, I feel I should hereafter compromise, if not perjure myself, if, for the sake of the grant, I ever attempt to fill up this said column; nay, I would rather forego four times the amount, and row in the same boat with so many others who I know think with me in this, and consider this Privy Council money injudiciously if not unfairly meted out.

“O tempora! O mores!” and I might add, O leges!!

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

East Rudham, July 19th, 1873.

FRED. MANBY.

ON THE SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE HOP-PICKING DISTRICTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I think you wrong our largest hop-growers by imputing that they do not take sufficient care of their hop-pickers. I live and practise in the largest hop-growing district in the world, and I will give you a short account of how we manage our sanitary arrangements. Nearly all the large growers in the neighbourhood pay me so much each

for visiting their premises every day during the hop-picking season. Any case of sickness that may have occurred I visit, and if it has the slightest symptom of infection I immediately order the man whose duty it is to go with me round the hopper houses to communicate with the sanitary officer, and to have the case removed to the infectious ward of the workhouse. I have the house thoroughly lime-washed, Condy’s fluid sprinkled about, and the house shut up. The man who is detailed off for this duty is also instructed to remove all filth, and use chloride of lime freely. The guardians also pay me extra to make up large quantities of diarrhoea mixture, which is distributed at convenient places, and can be had gratis by anyone applying for it, and they are also told, “if two or three doses do not check the diarrhoea, to apply for medical aid.” Our relieving officers have been sanitary officers, and the one in our district (Mr. Clearer) has been most energetic in working with me; and the result has been, I may say, total suppression of infectious diseases, for we have been most energetic in seizing bad meat and fish. By letting him know where I am at different parts of the day, if he caught a man selling bad meat or fish, he was able to seize, find me, and it was taken before a magistrate, condemned, and destroyed in an incredibly short space of time; and the fearful stuff that I have condemned no one would credit. Last year, by my notes, I find we prosecuted seven delinquents, most of whom were condemned to prison without the option of a fine; the quantity of food was 1575 herrings, 14 cwt. of bacon, pork, &c. In three or four hours the whole of that would have been disseminated through the district, and I need not tell you with what result. But this coming hop-picking, I assure you candidly, I dread. For, advised by Major Cox, Local Government inspector, our guardians have joined with several other unions and appointed a sanitary medical officer, at a salary of £800, which medical officer, to be in the centre of his district, will reside, I should say, about fourteen miles off. The sanitary officer also now has a large district, and his duties must call him a long way off. The result will be that sundry cargoes of diseased food will be sent into our district, I feel sure with the effect of producing a vast amount of sickness to the people, and Heaven knows how much expense to the guardians. I cannot give too much credit to our great hop-growers, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Whitehead, Messrs. Lewis, Mr. Bannerman, Mr. Kennard, Mr. Day, &c., for the care they take of the poor creatures temporarily working for them. I quite agree with you that some of the small hop-growers treat their hoppers like pigs, but to say so of most of the large ones would be a gross libel.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

East Farleigh, July 26th, 1873.

EDWARD M. OWENS.

PENCIL-CASE THERMOMETERS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In THE LANCET of July 26th your correspondent, Dr. Hilliard, says, “Having seen an advertisement in THE LANCET (July 19th) from Messrs. Salt and Son, of Birmingham, bringing under the notice of the profession a clinical thermometer adapted to the American screw pencil-case, I ask your permission to bring before your readers my claim to priority of invention, as more than two months since I had a thermometer prepared on this plan, but abandoned it.” The following letter (No. 1) will substantiate our claims to the invention, proving, as it does, that we produced a sample as early as March 20th, or two months earlier than the date of Dr. Hilliard’s claim:—

“Albert Works, Graham-street, Birmingham, July 28th, 1873.

“GENTLEMEN,—On referring to your orders, I find that on March 10th you commissioned me to make you a pencil-case thermometer, and made you one on March 20th, when I received your order for one gross.—Yours truly,

“Messrs. Salt and Son.”

“W. E. WILEY.

Dr. Hilliard, in the same letter, introduces an engraving of a thermometer, in favour of which he discarded the one we adopted. Upon further consideration of our invention, we are perfectly satisfied therewith, being convinced that a comparison with others similar will prove its superiority. The annexed woodcut gives a fair representation of our instrument, which may be described as follows, viz.:—The