went and sat down by Mr. Cook. They had some grog before them. Mr. Cook's glass was full. Mr. Cook asked me to take something, and at the same time he said to Mr. Palmer, "Palmer, you'll have some more grog?" Mr. Palmer made answer, "No, I will not have any more until you have drunk yours," or some words to that effect. Mr. Cook replied, "Oh, I will drink mine;" and thereupon he took up the glass and drank the contents. He had not drunk it a minute before he exclaimed, "There is something in it—it burns my throat awfully," or something to that effect. Mr. Palmer rose from his seat, went across the room, took hold of the glass, in which a teaspoonful of liquid was left, drank it off, and said, "There is nothing in it." Mr. Palmer pushed the glass towards me and said, "Do you think there is anything in it?" Mr. Cook left the room, taking with him one of the candles. He returned in about ten minutes and called me, and we went into my sitting-room. He told me he had been to the water-closet, and had been dreadfully sick, and that he believed Mr. Palmer had "dosed" him. He repeated this several times during the evening, adding, that the stuff had burned his throat. He gave me his money, between 700*l.* and 800*l.*, to take care of for him, as he feared he had been "dosed" for the sake of the money. His words were, "Here is my money; take care of it, for I believe I have been dosed." Before I could count the money he was taken sick again, and was obliged to leave the room. He had not taken anything to drink in the meantime. After being absent again for ten minutes or so, he came back, said he was certainly very ill, and asked me to go with him to his bed-room. I remained with him until nearly two o'clock. He continued to be sick occasionally, but not purged. I sent for the doctor, who at first recommended an emetic, but on hearing how sick he had already been, he sent a draught to quiet the system. We gave him a dose of the mixture, and his stomach became quiet, and we afterwards gave him the pills. The next morning Mr. Cook was up before me, and came into my room, and I gave him back his money. He alluded to the affair of the night before, and said that he believed Mr. Palmer put something into his brandy. Between ten and eleven o'clock the same morning he told me that he had taxed Mr. Palmer with having dosed him, but that he replied that he had done nothing of the sort, and he added, "I suppose he did not."

SKAIFE GIBSON was then examined. He stated that he was assistant to Mr. Heathcote, surgeon, of Shrewsbury, and remembered being sent for to see Mr. Cook. Mr. Cook complained of pain in the stomach, which appeared much distended with wind. He mentioned that he thought a poison had been given him with his brandy, and he recommended an emetic, and said he would send one, but he said that he could make himself sick, and thereupon drank about three-quarters of a pint of warm water, and put the handle of a tooth-brush down his throat. The water returned in as clear a state as when he took it. If any poison had been taken into the system, it had evidently been thrown up before. He had previously noticed some green matter, something like bile, in the wash-hand basin. He afterwards, on being again sent to, prescribed a draught to quiet the system. Mr. Heathcote kept strychnine. It was commonly sold to doctors.

It being now ten o'clock, the inquiry was adjourned till eight o'clock on Saturday morning.

Mr. GIBSON recalled, stated that he examined the tongue of Mr. Cook on the night when he was called in, and found it perfectly clean. If Mr. Cook had suffered from diarrhoea or had been drunk, the tongue would have been discoloured.

Witnesses were then examined to show that the telegraphic message to Mr. Herring was not sent by Mr. Cook, but by Mr. Palmer. The original copy of the message was asked for, but it appeared that Mr. Palmer had sent for it from the telegraph office two or three days before, and it was not to be found.

ELIZABETH MILLS was recalled, and stated that during Mr. Cook's illness she noticed a small book on the looking-glass. The book had a clasp on it. It had since been looked for, but could not be found. Soon after Mr. Cook was dead—she should say in about ten minutes—Mr. Jones, the surgeon, came out of the room and requested her to go in. She did so, and found Mr. Palmer there. He was searching the pockets of a coat, which she imagined to be Mr. Cook's, and also looked under the pillows and bolster. On Sunday before Mr. Cook's death, some broth was brought from Mr. Palmer's and she tasted it, and it seemed very good. On Monday night Mr. Palmer, as Mr. Cook had told her, brought some jelly with him from London.

Mr. JONES said,—Shortly after deceased's death I left the

room, and on my return I found Mr. Palmer with Mr. Cook's coat in his hand. I did not see Mr. Palmer take anything from the coat. He said to me, "You, as his nearest friend, had better search his pockets, and take possession of what there may be in them." I searched his pockets, and all that I found in them was a purse containing a £5 note and about 5*s.* Some conversation took place about the betting-book, and Mr. Palmer said that all the bets were void, and that the book was of no use to any one. Both of us made a slight search for the betting-book, but we did not find it. On Friday, on my return from London, I searched for Mr. Cook's betting-book, but could not find it.

By the Foreman.—When I returned to the room, shortly after the death of Mr. Cook, I found that the body of the deceased had been removed from the position in which he died. It seemed as though the body had been removed while some one searched under the bolster. Mr. Cook told me he had been a winner of £1400 altogether. He had not received the money when I left him on Tuesday. I believe he received £700 or £800 on the course.

Mr. FISHER recalled, stated that Mr. Cook and Mr. Palmer frequently joined in bets. It was a common practice.

ELLIS CRISP examined, said—I am inspector of police at Rugeley. On the Friday I was requested by Mr. Stevens to search the bed-room in which the deceased died, his clothes, and portmanteau, to see if I could find the betting-book. I searched minutely for the book in the presence of Mr. Gardner and a gentleman named Dark, but I could find no trace of it.

SARAH BOND was examined, but her evidence was much to the same effect as that of the chambermaid.

Mr. Cook, druggist, of Stafford, who stated that a short time ago Mr. Palmer called at his shop, and asked what was the usual dose of prussic acid to kill a dog, and W. Sanders, horse-trainer, who showed the connexion between the deceased and Mr. Palmer in betting matters, were the only other witnesses examined, and the coroner having summed up, the jury, after six or seven minutes' deliberation, declared their finding to be that "the deceased died of poison wilfully administered to him by William Palmer."

The coroner immediately made out his warrant for the committal of Mr. Palmer to the county gaol at Stafford, for trial at the March assizes, for the Wilful Murder of Mr. Cook.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

GRIEVANCES OF UNION SURGEONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I thank you very sincerely for the insertion of my correspondence, and for the aid you have given our cause by your able leading articles, which ought to arouse the energy of every union surgeon, and excite the sympathy of the profession generally. To the union surgeons I would say, let the senior medical officer in each union consider it his especial duty to call his colleagues together, and if he fail to do so within one month, another should act in his stead; at this meeting a local secretary should be appointed, whose duty it would be to represent his colleagues at a general assembly of all the local secretaries in each county. These meetings I would arrange to take place simultaneously throughout the kingdom, on receiving information of the local appointments. At the assembly in each county, one or more representatives, according to the number of the local secretaries, should be appointed, whose duty it would be to meet their colleagues in London and determine on the best course to be pursued. By this means we centralize our influence, ascertain the sentiments of the profession, and gain a better position to enforce the redress of our grievances. It would be a part of the duty of the local secretaries to collect subscriptions. If every union surgeon would agree to give from half-a-crown to five shillings a quarter, it would render our arrangements permanent, without any extraneous aid, but as I regret to say some are not in a position to afford even this help, and others will not, we must not refuse the assistance of our more independent brethren. Considerable expenses may have to be incurred in printing, postage, advertisements, &c. As it would be unfair to expect our local secretaries and representatives to sacrifice their valuable time, which is money to them, I would propose that each local secre-

tary should receive half-a-guinea for each county meeting he attends if more than three miles from his residence, or a guinea if beyond seven miles; and that a representative should have three guineas for each day he is absent from his home or the duties of his office.

In 1854, a committee of the House of Commons (obtained by Mr. Pigott) recommended—

1. That the medical appointments should be permanent.
2. That the salaries should be revised and increased.
3. That the districts should be examined.

The first of these has been carried out; we may therefore with justice petition Parliament to compel the Poor-law Board to concede the remainder, though I am of opinion, as I before stated, that our petition should extend still further, and pray to be removed from the authority of the present Poor-law Board and guardians, and be placed under medical authority, with payment from the Consolidated Fund; but I am willing to leave all these points to the consideration of our representatives.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Weymouth, Dec. 1855. RICHARD GRIFFIN.

THE APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—If candidates for the office of Officers of Health are to be subjected to an examination in order to test their ability, it becomes necessary to look for a body capable of conducting such examination. I conceive none better fitted for such duty than the President and Council of the Epidemiological Society, whose particular attention must have been directed to those phenomena of disease an extensive knowledge of which is essentially necessary for the efficient Officer of Health.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Chelsea, Dec. 1855. EDWARD BULLOCK.

THE SCOTCH UNIVERSITY AND THE SOCIETY OF APOTHECARIES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Having perused, in your journal of the 8th inst., the motion of Dr. Sibbald—viz., “That the Edinburgh Town Council memorialize the Home Secretary on the present unjust and partial application in the medical appointments in the Poor-law Unions in England, whereby Scotch doctors are excluded because they have not been subjected to an examination by the Apothecaries’ Company,” (which he is pleased to call an inferior licensing body,) I would propose, as an amendment, that the general practitioners of England memorialize the Home Secretary to interest himself in obtaining power from the present Worshipful Society of Apothecaries to grant, instead of their present title, the same one as given to those who pass a similar examination at the St. Andrew’s and other like institutions, and charge the same amount, which will thus be a means of retaining a nice sum of money in this country, instead of driving it to another division of the United Kingdom, as well as placing such individuals in a proper position with the public; for those who know the derivation of the word “apothecary” must think it very unsuitable for gentlemen who have passed the examination at the Apothecaries’ Hall, which has done far more than any other institution towards producing the general practitioners of the present day, and converting them in reality into the country physicians, therefore as fully entitled to be Medicinæ Doctores as the obtainers of St. Andrew’s and some other Scotch degrees.

By thus undeceiving an undiscerning public, I can then see no objection to the eligibility of Scotch physicians to the appointments already alluded to; but, as a distinguishing mark between the two, would suggest that there be a Blackfriars doctor and a Scotch one. Present members of the Hall might be entitled to the same distinction by an additional payment, depending upon the number of years they have been in full practice, or something to that effect.

I remain, Sir, yours respectfully,
Holbeach, Dec. 1855. A CLEVER BUT POOR APOTHECARY.

CESSATION OF THE CHOLERA AT LYONS.—The cholera has now quite ceased at Lyons, and during its prevalence made happily but few victims. The disease broke out August 12th, and lasted up to November 20th. During this period about eighty deaths were recorded.

THE SURGERY OF THE WAR.

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE BRITISH ARMY IN THE CRIMEA

DURING THE WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 24TH.

THE Inspector-General of Hospitals states:—The health of the army continues remarkably good. There has been a decrease in the number of admissions this week, but the ratios of mortality, and sick to well, are nearly the same as they were last week. The admissions and deaths have been—

	Week ended November 24th.			Previous Week.		
	Admitted.	Died.		Admitted.	Died.	
Fevers	234	13		248	16	
Pulmonic	142	2		118	1	
Diarrhoea	182	5		242	5	
Cholera	14	9		3	6	
Dysentery	49	3		66	3	
Wounds and Injuries	63	11		230	20	
Other Diseases	515	6		552	0	
Total	1199	49		1459	51	

The ratio of admissions to strength has been 2·27 per cent.; of deaths to strength, 0·09 per cent.; exclusive of wounded, 0·07 per cent.; of sick to well, 6·56 per cent.; exclusive of wounded, 5·06 per cent. Last week they were 2·71, 0·09, 0·05, 6·51, 4·98 per cent. respectively.

Some few cases of fever in the 28th and 38th Regiments, of the third division, have assumed a typhoid character within the last fortnight, and Mr. Taylor, the principal medical officer of the division, thinking the health of these corps might be influenced by a cemetery in the valley beneath their camp, Sir William Eyre, the general of division, gave directions that the dead should be buried at a greater distance, and measures of precaution adopted with the present cemetery.

On the 21st, winter may be said to have set in, as we had rain, followed by a slight sprinkling of snow in the course of the night. Since then, we have had rain, with one intervening fine day.

This change in the weather has added to the number of admissions under the head of chest diseases.

Bowel complaints have been less numerous this week, but there is a slight increase under the head of cholera. The Fusilier Guards have suffered more than any other corps from this disease during the week, as six out of the fourteen admissions, and three out of the nine deaths which occurred, took place in that regiment alone.

This disease has broken out in an epidemic form at Scutari, and has proved very fatal. From the 14th, when it first appeared, to the 20th, the date of my last report, six officers and ninety-nine men had died; but when the mail left, Dr. Linton, principal medical officer at Scutari, thought the disease was assuming a milder form. The troops had been removed from barracks, and encamped, he thought with benefit; but another regiment of the German Legion had just arrived when he wrote, which will, in all probability, renew the epidemic if they are landed there, and placed with the rest.

Nearly one-fourth of our casualties this week are from injuries, and I am sorry to say four deaths have occurred from direct drunkenness. Three of them were suffocated in their helpless insensibility, by a portion of the contents of the stomach being drawn into the air-passages during their efforts to vomit, and one died of fits brought on by the same cause (drunkenness).

The vice of drunkenness is very prevalent at present, and difficult to prevent with the amount of means the men have at their command. The spirit ration has been reduced one-half, and might be abolished altogether, I think, with advantage, as the healthiest army I ever served with had not a drop of spirits or any fermented liquor for months: and that, too, on service in the field, at the Cape of Good Hope.

Government has sent out malt liquor of excellent quality, and every encouragement is given to the men to use it; but they prefer spirits, as a readier and more exciting means of intoxication.

The men here had warm clothing issued to them, which was taken into wear on the 21st ult. Their rations are good, their duties and fatigue light,—indeed, not beyond what is necessary for the preservation of health; and an immense wooden city is rising rapidly to shelter them during the winter; so that, as far as creature comforts are concerned, they have nothing to complain of.