in Scotland against the conjoint scheme is universal. I am told that there has been a considerable change of opinion, even in England, because I know persons who were at one time very strong advocates of the conjoint scheme, but who are now only lukewarm supporters of it. Under the English conjoint scheme five guineas out of the thirty to be paid by a candidate would go to the museum of the College of Surgeons of England, and it seems to me that it is an anomaly for candidates to have to pay to support what is regarded as a national institution. If the museum is a national institution, it should be maintained out of the national purse. I can sympathise with those who think there should be a representative of the general practitioners in some form or other on the Medical Council, but I have not the means of giving a definite opinion as to whether the best means of selecting that representative is by a general vote. If by the conjoint scheme you diminish the number of our graduates and students, you so far diminish the standard of general education throughout the country, and, on the other hand, if the conjoint examination is up to our standard, a sufficient number of persons would not be admitted to the general profession to satisfy the requirements of the public.

By Dr. LUSH.

We have tried to frame a conjoint scheme in Scotland, but after various attempts we came to the conclusion that we did not see our way to carry it out. We object to the conjoint scheme as unnecessary. There is a profound difference between the universities of Scotland and those of England as teaching bodies. In Scotland we fulfil the old function and ideal of a university as a complete teaching body. Visitations of examinations I consider to be of great importance, but it must be borne in mind that those visitations are very expensive. If it had not been for prospective medical legislation I think the Medical Council would have carried out systematic visitations, selecting a certain number of bodies to be visited each year. What defence can be offered for giving a university like Durham a separate representative, and yoking the Scotch universities together?

The CHAIRMAN.—Do members of the Council represent the whole of the profession, or more particularly the interests of their own bodies?

Mr. TURNER.—I hold myself at perfect liberty to discuss from a broad and general view any subject that arises in the Council, quite irrespective of whatever is done in my own institution. I think the Medical Council, in its general constitution, is a very excellent body.

Dr. LUSH.—Outside the Council there seems to be pretty nearly a consensus of opinion that the Council has failed to do what it ought to have done.

Mr. TURNER.—It should be remembered that the powers of the Council are really only recommendatory. If you look at it from that point of view I think the Council has done a great and efficient work. The whole system of preliminary education has been adopted and carried out through the recommendations of the Council.

By Mr. MAITLAND.

The medical authorities in Scotland largely represent the profession, and therefore I think it might be said that the profession in that country has pronounced against the conjoint scheme. If anything were enacted which would add to the trouble and expense of obtaining a university education, the standard of medical education would be lowered.

By Mr. WHEELHOUSE.

I have heard a statement made that pass examinations are easier in Scotland than in England, but I have no knowledge of it as a fact. The Scotch university examinations are more critical and close than those of the English corporations, and are on a level with the examinations at the universities in England.

The Committee then adjourned till Tuesday.

HEALTH OF LARGE ENGLISH TOWNS IN THE TWENTY-NINTH WEEK OF 1879.

IN twenty of the largest English towns, 5240 births and 2418 deaths were registered during last week. The births exceeded by 58, whereas the deaths were so many as 952 below, the average weekly numbers during 1878. The

deaths showed a further decline of 74 from the numbers returned in recent weeks. The annual rate of mortality per 1000 persons living, which had pretty steadily declined in the nineteen preceding weeks from 29.1 to 17.6, further fell last week to 17.1. This is the lowest death-rate on record for these twenty towns in any week since the beginning of 1876, when the whole of them were first included in the Registrar-General's Weekly Return. The lowest death-rates in these twenty towns last week were 11.2 in Plymouth, 12.8 in Brighton, 13.5 in Portsmouth, 14.1 in Sunderland, and 14.5 in Nottingham and Leicester. The rates in the other towns ranged upwards to 19.1 in Salford, 19.6 in Liverpool and in Manchester, and 22.4 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The death-rate in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in recent weeks has shown a marked excess. The deaths referred to the seven principal zymotic diseases in the twenty towns last week declined to 348, the lowest number on record, and included 100 from measles, 91 from scarlet fever, and 79 from whooping-cough. The annual death-rate from these seven diseases averaged only 2.5 per 1000 in the twenty towns, and ranged from 0.0 in Brighton and Wolverhampton, to 3.3 and 4.4 in Sheffield and Salford. Scarlet fever showed the greatest proportional fatality in Salford, Sunderland, and Sheffield; and measles in London and Bradford. Whooping-cough was most prevalent in Birmingham and Sheffield. The 14 deaths referred to fever in the twenty towns, of which only 5 occurred in London, were unprecedentedly few. Of the 11 fatal cases of diphtheria, 10 were returned in London. Only 47 deaths from diarrhoea were registered last week in the twenty towns, against 669, 243, and 602 in the corresponding week of the three years 1876-7-8. Small-pox caused 6 more deaths in London (and 8 in Dublin), but not one in any of the nineteen large provincial towns. The number of small-pox patients in the metropolitan asylum hospitals further fell during last week to 137, from 190 and 172 at the end of the two preceding weeks. Only 17 new cases of small-pox were admitted to these hospitals during last week, against 41, 28, and 21 in the three previous weeks.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, July 18th.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.

In answer to Mr. C. Brown,

Colonel STANLEY said the usual notice had been given as to the conditions under which successful candidates at the examination in August would enter the Army Medical Department. He hoped that by that time the new Warrant now under the consideration of the Treasury would have been issued; but if it were not, the examinations would be held under the old one. He hoped, however, that the new one, which in substance carried out many of the recommendations of the committee which sat last year, might be published by that time.

THE ARMY MEDICAL REPORTS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—My attention has just been called to a letter in your issue of the 19th inst., signed "Medicus," and written from India. In this letter I am taken to task for not having sufficiently impressed the minds of those passing through the course of special instruction here with the virtues of the chloride of ammonium in hepatic diseases. This is to me a remarkable statement, seeing that I have never failed to do so during the last twelve years. I have been in the habit of taking Dr. Stewart's pamphlet into the lecture room, and reading extracts from it, giving the experience of that medical officer of its use in India. For nine years his pamphlet on the subject, published in 1870, lay on the library-table here, where it was placed by me, with a paper attached to it inviting the attention of medical candidates to it, and from thence it was only removed to be bound up with other papers intended for preservation. The chloride of ammonium is in daily use in our wards here, and has

been ever since this hospital was opened, as must be known to hundreds of medical officers of the three services who have passed through the Army Medical School.

The professors here have nothing to do with "the list of medicines for a field pharmacy waggon," and are in no way responsible for the omission noticed by "Medicus."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

W. C. MACLEAN, M.D.,

Professor of Military Medicine.

Army Medical School, Netley, 22nd July, 1879.

BIRMINGHAM.

(From our own Correspondent.)

DESPITE the badness of trade in Birmingham and the neighbourhood the Saturday collection for the hospitals may be pronounced a great success. At a meeting held July 4th, under the presidency of the Mayor, the following balance-sheet was presented:—Total receipts, £3421 10s. 2d., being £3330 2s. 11d. collected in manufactories, workshops, and other industrial establishments, and £91 7s. 3d. collected by licensed victuallers and beer retailers. The disbursements included £152 19s. 3d. for advertising, printing, and bill-posting, and £152 9s. 6d. for management expenses, leaving £3116 1s. 5d. for distribution among the hospitals. The balance of the "Mayor's Relief Fund," collected during the late severe winter, has been handed over to the hospitals.

The fourth annual meeting of the Birmingham Medical Mission has been held during the past week. The chair was occupied by our respected *confrère*, Mr. Samuel Berry, there being also present many of the local clergy and non-conforming ministers, together with numerous influential laymen. The financial statement showed the receipts of the general fund to have been £609 7s. 4d., and the expenditure £641 10s. 11d., leaving an adverse balance of £32 3s. 7d. The receipts of the building fund were £2431 5s., and the disbursements, £2176 14s., showing a balance in hand of £254 11s. During the past year 3295 new patients have been treated. It is a gratifying feature of the report that £60 3s. 11½d. has been subscribed in pence by the poor people themselves towards the support of the institution. The mission now occupies new and commodious premises in Floodgate-street.

The Children's Hospital, one of our most popular institutions, has begun to feel the effects of the generally prevailing commercial depression. It has, unfortunately, been found necessary to close one of the scarlet fever wards through lack of funds, as, notwithstanding the most rigid economy in its management, the hospital is now incurring a debt at the rate of from £12 to £15 per week. The cost of maintaining officers and servants has been reduced to 7s. 2d. per head per week, and patients to only 2s. 7½d. It is much to be regretted that an application made to the Town Council by the hospital authorities for pecuniary help was not acceded to, as the contagious department of this hospital has been eminently useful to the inhabitants of Birmingham, by preventing the spread of zymotic diseases. The matter was eventually referred to the Health Committee, who, it is hoped, may see their way to give such assistance as may enable the committee to reopen the scarlet fever ward.

A vacancy having occurred at the Queen's College in the chairs of Chemistry and Practical Chemistry, through the resignation of Professor Bruce, Dr. Bostock Hill, the son of our respected medical officer of health (Dr. Alfred Hill), was elected by a large majority. There were four other candidates. The Council have determined that the new professor shall deliver 100 lectures in the winter and 50 in the summer session. The introductory lecture, at the opening of the ensuing winter session, will be delivered by Dr. Sawyer, Physician to the Queen's Hospital, and Professor of Materia Medica at the Queen's College.

The examination returns of the primary and pass examinations at the College of Surgeons for 1878 and 1879 are most creditable to the teachers and students of the Birmingham School. In the scholastic year of 1878 and 1879 the average percentage of rejections for all schools has been 32·48 per cent. for the primary, and 32·22 for the pass

examination; while the rejections of Birmingham students have been only 15·7 per cent. for the primary, and 17·5 for the pass examination.

The health of the borough, notwithstanding the almost unceasing rain and cold weather, is very satisfactory, the Registrar-General's returns ending Saturday last showing that while the average rate of mortality in the eleven large towns has been 18 per thousand, in Birmingham it has only reached 17 per thousand.

The arrangements for the coming musical festival in aid of the funds of the General Hospital are rapidly approaching completion.

Birmingham, July 22nd, 1879.

P A R I S.

WE beg to intimate to our readers in Paris, and on the Continent generally, that we have made entirely new arrangements as regards the representation of THE LANCET in Paris. From this date the gentleman solely empowered to act as our correspondent commences his contributions—

"OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT."

The annual meeting of the Academy of Medicine was held on the 15th of July. This sitting is generally opened by a speech from the perpetual secretary, which forms the *éloge* of the members of the Academy who have died in the year. The names of the laureates, prizemen, and bursars are then announced, and the proceedings terminate with the publication of the subjects for the next prize competition. The audience assembled on the 15th was much smaller than usual, as it was known that M. Bécларd did not intend to speak. It was noted especially that the ladies, who generally congregate on the front seats, were conspicuous on this occasion by their absence. Those who would, no doubt, have flocked to weep at the panegyric of their lost friends and advisers—Chauffard, Gubler, Tardieu, Jolly, Piorry, and Jacquemier—very rightly foresaw that the ordinary business of the Academy would be of too tame a character to have any attraction for them. Of the twelve prizes offered for competition, seven remained unclaimed, the ambition of candidates being checked by the known severity of the judges. Essays had been sent in for the other five, but only one of these was considered worthy of the full reward, this being a memoir on Aconite and Aconitine by MM. Laborde and Duquenel, which obtained the Prix Orfila of 6000 francs. Grants of money were made to some of the other candidates by way of encouragement, M. Roussel getting 1000 francs for his work in connexion with Transfusion, and M. Burq 2000 francs "to continue his researches on the Action of Metals in Therapeutics," but with the understanding that the Academy did not endorse (*se porter garante*) his theories. After the secretary had read the long list of those to whom medals or other recompenses had been awarded for different kinds of sanitary work, the subjects for the prizes to be given in 1880 were made known by the President. (These will be found in another column.) A paper was then read by M. Chéreau, the librarian of the Faculty of Medicine, on the Discovery of the Pulmonary Circulation. It will be remembered that an article recently appeared on this subject in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Its writer, M. Charles Richet, called particular attention to some passages on Servet's De Christianismi Restitutio, which show that Servet was acquainted with the passage of blood through the lungs, and has started anew the old discussion as to the relative merit of Harvey and his predecessors. M. Chéreau brings great learning and research to prove that Servet must no longer be credited with this discovery. It was Realdo Colombo, "the Claude Bernard of the sixteenth century, the type of the true *savant*, the enemy of hollow theory, the lover of truth, and seeking it in vivisection"—it was Colombo who first recognised the physiology of the lesser circulation. As to Servet, his writings are those of a visionary; the passages which occur in his work are too vague to have any meaning, and, at the best, he is but a clumsy copyist, wholly devoid of originality. If M. Chéreau's arguments did not convince all his hearers, he, at any rate, managed to interest them, and, in spite of much Latin and anatomy, his communication was received with marked attention.

The Prefect of the Seine intends to make some changes in