health authority having no ambulance, and to the fact that they left the guardians to send the parish conveyance for such cases, that these patients, after being kept for from two to six hours under conditions which, to say the least, were not calculated to promote their ultimate convalescence, had to be sent at the expense of the hospital authorities in a public conveyance to the Small-pox Hospital. It was soon seen that this practice must, therefore, be discontinued, unless the local health authority would act in the matter. Two communications addressed to that body having elicited no reply, a formal notice was sent to them that in future all applicants suffering from small-pox would be referred to the workhouse authorities. There is no ambulance society in the district to which I refer.

Now, Sir, what other course could the hospital managers pursue? That the answer is difficult to find is proved by the knowledge that an application to the Local Government Board has remained for nearly two months unanswered.

Will you give practical effect to the concluding sentence of your annotation by telling hospital authorities what to do in such cases, and will you give us a specimen of the "instructions which should be permanently suspended in the outpatients' rooms for the information of the officials"?

Such courtesy on your part will be gratefully appreciated, because the example I have given of the inefficient arrangements of the local health authorities is, I believe, not an exception, but the rule throughout the metropolitan area.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.,

HENRY C. BURDETT.

Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich, July 14th, 1879.

* * We have to thank Mr. Burdett for this instructive note, confirmatory of our observations last week. We shall recur to the subject in our next number.—ED. L.

SYPHILITIC PARAPLEGIA; RAPID CURE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The notes of the following case may prove interesting to your readers as viewed in conjunction with a clinical lecture by Dr. Buzzard on the above subject, which appeared in your journal of April 5th.

C. K.—, aged thirty-eight, a powerful-looking man, married, with three healthy children, seen first on May 1st, had been confined to bed since April 28th. I found him complaining of severe pain in lumbar region, pain and stiffness of both legs, swelling and pain in both right knee and left ankle joints; said the pains had been shifting from one joint to the other. His tongue was furred; pulse 102, temperature 99°; had been very restless for the last few nights. I considered it a case of subacute rheumatism, and ordered a calomel purge and a mixture containing the bicarbonates and nitrates of potash.

May 2nd.—Had a better night. Less pain in joints. He could not raise himself to the sitting position without assistance, and this increased the pain very much in both back and lower extremities. I now discovered that he was almost completely paraplegic—had lost total power over the right lower extremity, and had only slight motion at the ankle-joint of the left. It was the first time that he himself was conscious of the loss of power; sensation was very little, if at all, diminished; very slight reflex irritability; excited by tickling or pricking the soles of the feet, the only movement excited was a slight twitching of the toes. No tenderness on pressure along the spine; no unusual feeling excited by passing the hot sponge; no urinary trouble. I now found that three days previous to my seeing him he had walked a mile and a half and had sat down for an hour. On getting up to return home he found he could not stand. After a short time this passed off and he was able to walk home; his only inconvenience arising from the great pain in his back. Although he had told me he never had a day's illness in his life, I discovered what I considered to be a well-marked syphilide on his arm, which had first appeared about four years ago. I also learned that about the same time he had some trouble with his eyes and almost became blind. After a short treatment his eyes got well, but the eruption persisted. He denied having ever had a chancre. I now ordered him a mixture containing ten-grain doses of iodide of potassium and one-eighth of a grain of the bichloride of mercury, and a ten per cent. solution of oleate of mercury to be well rubbed into his back.

3rd.—Pulse 99; tongue furred; temperature normal.

Less pain; swelling in ankle-joint gone; no pain in knee. Bowels have acted; power in extremities the same. Treatment continued.

4th.—Pulse 90; tongue furred; temperature normal. Condition of right lower extremity the same, but decidedly more power in left. Slept well.

5th.—Has gained considerable power over right leg; power over left seems completely restored. No pain in back; some stiffness.

6th.—Found him with both knees flexed. Says he is quite well, only a little stiffness in back and thighs.

7th.—Can walk across the room without pain; only complains of the stiffness in back and thighs.

From this time he made a good recovery, and is now able to follow his employment as a market-gardener. During his treatment the eruption on his arm almost disappeared.

The case is remarkable for its rapid cure. I have no doubt what I had to deal with was a circumscribed gummatous meningitis, but, happily, arrested before any injury to the cord was produced. There are many points in this case agreeing with one of Dr. Buzzard's; amongst them are the low temperature, and the want of tenderness on pressure of the spine. I cannot help thinking that I have seen a number of such cases as this one in hospital, hopelessly going on from bad to worse, owing, no doubt, to not being early recognised.

HENRY M'CLURE, M.D.

Chadwell Heath, Essex, June 2nd, 1879.

ENGLISH PRACTITIONERS AND INVALIDS RESIDENT ABROAD.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—In the article on "English Practitioners and Invalids resident abroad," in THE LANCET of the 12th inst., the case against Belgium is rather overstated. Permission to practise has usually, but not invariably, been refused to English medical men. I obtained it in 1875, and have resided in Brussels ever since; but I believe I am at the present time the only person holding English diplomas in practice in Belgium.

The text of the *arrêté royal*, as the licence is called, runs thus:—"Le sieur — est autorisé à pratiquer l'art de guérir en Belgique." So you see the foreign medical man's practice is not restricted to his own countrymen; he really enjoys most of the privileges of his Belgian *confrères*.

This royal decree is, however, never granted except after an examination, which is not very easy; but I can certify that no more obstacles are thrown in the way of Englishmen than of any other foreigners. In that respect the examiners are very impartial.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

P. J. THOMSON, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond.
Rue de Namur, Brussels, July 16th, 1879.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, July 10th.

SURGEONS IN IRISH GAOLS.

Mr. BRUEN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether the surgeons of gaols in Ireland who were appointed by Boards of Superintendence, and who had performed the duties of their office before and since the 1st day of April, 1878, were recognised by Her Majesty's Government as "officers attached to prisons" within the meaning of Sec. 27 of the General Prisons (Ireland) Act, 1877; whether surgeons not so appointed, but obliged, as surgeons of infirmaries to perform medical duties in gaols, and who had performed them before and since the 1st day of April, 1878, were so recognised; and whether any salary would be paid to prison medical officers for duties performed from the 1st day of April, 1878, to the present time; and, if so, whether he would lay upon the table of the House a scale of the salaries to be paid for the performance of these duties.

Mr. J. LOWTHER.—My answer to all my hon friend's inquiries is in the affirmative; and, in addition to the table of salaries, I will lay upon the table an explanatory document, which will make the matter clear.