

cases with eight deaths at Toledo. Rumour has it that cases have occurred in Portugal, but no detailed information as to this is as yet forthcoming. Cholera is still prevailing at the quarantine station El Tor, in the Gulf of Suez, and between the 26th and 31st of August thirty-nine new cases with eighteen deaths were recorded. Some cases are occurring at Jeddah, and the disease has broken out at Yembo. Mecca and Medina are stated to be free, and the mainland of Egypt still remains without any reported cases. The outbreak of cholera in Japan seems to have assumed somewhat serious proportions, and it is reported that some 200 deaths a day are taking place there. At Nagasaki 926 cases and 671 deaths took place in twenty days, and the disease has spread to all the towns from Matsuma to Hakodate; some cases also occurred amongst the crews in Yokohama harbour, which was quitted by certain vessels, including H.M.S. *Impérieuse*, with a view of avoiding the epidemic. Some half-dozen reputed cases of cholera have occurred in London and a few in distant towns; but on inquiry they all turn out either to be the ordinary English cholera which is seen every year at this season, or to have no connexion at all with cholera in any form.

ATROPINE AS AN ANTIDOTE TO CYANIDE OF POTASSIUM.

A MAN in Halle recently took a considerable quantity of cyanide of potassium in solution, for the purpose of committing suicide. In order to be quite sure of attaining his object he also swallowed a solution of atropine. He was attacked by fainting fits, in consequence of which he was taken to the hospital; but on the following day, though no other antidote had been given, he was quite well. The *Pharmaceutische Zeitung* and the *Deutsche Medicinische Zeitung*, which publish the case, mention that atropine has before been recommended as an antidote in cases of poisoning by cyanide of potassium.

THE proposal to abolish the inferior diploma for medical practitioners in France, which is called the *officiat*, has begun to excite a good deal of opposition, especially amongst the professors in the smaller provincial medical schools. The members of the staffs of the Dijon and Clermont schools have commenced an agitation for the purpose of inducing their Parliamentary representatives to vote in favour of the continuance of both the *doctorat* and the *officiat*.

AT a recent meeting of the Academy of Sciences, Paris, M. le Baron Larrey presented Dr. Bateman's treatise on Aphasia to that learned Society. According to the Transactions of the Academy, the work was so well received by this august body that it was referred to the committee for the prize in Medicine and Surgery for 1891.

FROM Bad Kissingen we regret to hear that Dr. von Graefe, professor of Ophthalmic Medicine in the University of Halle, is dangerously ill. Dr. Solier and other leading physicians of Kissingen have met in consultation, and pronounce Dr. von Graefe's condition to be very critical.

VITAL STATISTICS.

HEALTH OF ENGLISH TOWNS.

IN twenty-eight of the largest English towns 5722 births and 3857 deaths were registered during the week ending Aug. 30th. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had been 21.0 per 1000 in each of the preceding two weeks, declined to 20.7 last week. The rate was 19.6 in London and 21.7 in the twenty-seven provincial towns. During the first nine weeks of the current quarter the death-rate in the twenty-eight towns averaged 19.1 per 1000, and was 1.4 below the mean rate in the corresponding periods of the ten years 1880-89. The lowest rates in these towns last week were 11.2 in Bristol, 12.6 in Nottingham,

13.3 in Halifax, and 15.2 in Blackburn. The rates in the other towns ranged upwards to 28.2 in Sheffield, 29.4 in Cardiff, 29.7 in Preston, and 35.2 in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The deaths referred to the principal zymotic diseases, which had increased in the preceding six weeks from 526 to 999, declined last week to 922.

HEALTH OF SCOTCH TOWNS.

The annual rate of mortality in the eight Scotch towns, which had risen from 17.2 to 18.9 per 1000 in the preceding three weeks, declined again to 16.8 in the week ending Aug. 30th, and was 3.9 below the rate that prevailed during the same period in the twenty-eight English towns. The rates in the Scotch towns ranged from 11.9 in Leith and 12.3 in Edinburgh and in Perth, to 18.3 in Glasgow and 22.9 in Dundee.

HEALTH OF DUBLIN.

The death-rate in Dublin, which had increased from 17.4 to 20.5 per 1000 in the preceding four weeks, further rose to 23.8 during the week ending Aug. 30th. During the first nine weeks of the current quarter the death-rate in the city averaged 20.7 per 1000, the rate for the same period being 18.6 in London and 16.6 in Edinburgh. The 161 deaths in Dublin showed an increase of 22 upon the number in the previous week.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

COCAINE TOXÆMIA.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—The leading article on Cocaine Toxæmia in your issue of Aug. 23rd makes me think that my experience of the injection of small doses of cocaine, accompanied by the use of Esmarch's bandage, may be worth recording. One of my earliest experiences of operation under cocaine anæsthesia was the performance of circumcision on an adult after the injection of one grain into the foreskin, which was followed by alarming toxic symptoms, giving me some considerable anxiety for an hour or two. From that time I have very seldom employed more than half a grain, and this I find, as a rule, quite sufficient if dissolved in about ten drops of water. In operating on the extremities I inject the solution into the cellular tissue, and then within half a minute apply an Esmarch's bandage. By this means the cocaine has time to become distributed over the field of operation, but has not time to be carried away by the blood current. I have found this means satisfactory in every respect, and have never had trouble since adopting it.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

Leeds, Aug. 30th, 1890.

A. W. MAYO ROBSON.

ON THE TREATMENT OF SPURS OF THE NASAL SEPTUM.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Dr. Swift Walker, in your issue of August 30th, affirms that spurs of the nasal septum can be removed by the galvano-cautery by his method. I quite agree with him. The kind of spur he evidently refers to can be removed by the galvano-cautery, and I have removed many myself. In my paper (THE LANCET, July 26th) I distinctly state that I refer to "spurs in the strict sense of the word"—that is, cartilaginous, osseo-cartilaginous, or osseous growths of the septum. Now, in most of these cases it would be quite impossible to pass an entomological needle through the spur, and much more impossible to "elevate the spur." I am sorry that I have also to differ from Dr. Walker as regards an anæsthetic. Anæsthetics are, in my opinion, given far too frequently in nasal surgery. If we possibly can we ought to do without.

I remain, Sirs, yours truly,

Bradford, Sept. 1st, 1890.

ADOLF BRONNER, M.D.

THE REPORTED CASE OF CHOLERA AT POPLAR.—Robert Teigh, the coal trimmer who was admitted to Poplar Hospital suffering from what was supposed to be cholera, was discharged on Saturday last from that institution.