

having an aggregate population of rather less than half a million of persons. The mean annual death-rate during the quarter in these towns was 24·7 per 1000, and was 1·3 below the mean rate in the same towns in the corresponding quarters of the eight years 1876-83. With reference to the recent prevalence of zymotic disease in Switzerland, it may be noted that, excepting only typhoid fever, it showed a decline last quarter, somewhat similar to the decline in the general death-rate. It is necessary, however, to refer to the epidemic of typhoid fever which has recently been so fatal in some parts of the country. The deaths from this disease in the fifteen Swiss towns were 228 in the second quarter of this year, against 64, 41, and 18 in the three preceding corresponding quarters. These 228 deaths were equal to an annual death-rate of 2·0 per 1000 in the Swiss towns, which was six times the rate from "fever" in the twenty-eight English towns during the same period. The epidemic was mainly confined to two centres of infection. In Zurich and its suburbs, with a population of 82,846 persons, the deaths from typhoid fever were 127, equal to 7·3 per 1000; while in Geneva and its suburbs, with a population of 70,765, the fatal cases were 82, and equal to 4·6 per 1000. In the thirteen other towns the deaths from this disease in the three months did not exceed nineteen. Towards the end of June the epidemic of typhoid fever in Geneva and Zurich had almost died out. More recently, however, a recrudescence has occurred in Geneva and its suburbs, and the recorded deaths from this disease, which had been 1 and 3 in the first two weeks of July, further rose to 10 in the third week of that month.

THE SERVICES.

THE COMPOSITION OF MEDICAL BOARDS.

A circular of the Government of India, Military Department, notifies a change in the composition of medical boards for the examination of officers of the Indian service proceeding on furlough on medical certificate, whether within or beyond Indian limits. Under the regulations now superseded, an officer of the Indian service, who can be granted furlough for a longer period than an officer of the British service, had to appear before a local medical board, presided over by an administrative medical officer, at the headquarters of divisions and districts, except in emergent cases, when a special medical board could be convened by the officer commanding the station. It has now been decided that all officers of the Indian service are in future to appear before local medical boards, composed of such officers as are available on the spot, subject to the conditions detailed in section 13 of the Regulations for the Medical Department, Bengal, 1882.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.—Brigade Surgeon Randolph Webb, to be Deputy Surgeon-General, vice W. Stewart, M.D., granted retired pay; Brigade Surgeon Richard Chapman Loffhouse, M.D., is granted retired pay, with the honorary rank of Deputy Surgeon-General; Surgeon-Major Albert Stanley Knight Prescott, to be Brigade Surgeon, vice R. O. Hayden, retired upon temporary half-pay; Surgeon-Major John Colahan, M.D., to be Brigade Surgeon, vice R. Webb, promoted; Surgeon-Major Thomas Walsh, to be Brigade Surgeon, vice J. H. Whittaker, granted retired pay; Surgeon-Major David Arthur Leslie, M.D., is granted retired pay, with the honorary rank of Brigade Surgeon.

ADMIRALTY.—Staff Surgeon Alexander Scott has been placed on the retired list of his rank.

The following appointments have been made:—Surgeon George J. Fogerty to Chatham Dockyard; Surgeon James S. Wray to the *Banterer*; Surgeon William M. Rae to the *Mistletoe*; Fleet Surgeon W. J. Eames, additional, to the *President*; and Staff Surgeon T. L. Horner, additional, to the *President*.

RIFLE VOLUNTEERS.—1st Cambridgeshire: John Parkinson Atkinson, Gent., M.D., to be Acting Surgeon.—1st Dumbartonshire: Acting Surgeon James Stevenson, M.B., resigns his appointment.—4th Lancashire: William Mitchell Roocroft, Gent., to be Acting Surgeon.—3rd Volunteer Battalion, the Prince Albert's (Somersetshire Light Infantry): Surgeons Henry William Livett and William Harford Glover Phelps, M.D., are granted the honorary rank of Surgeon-Major.—1st Stirlingshire: Alexander Duncan Fraser, Gent., M.B., to be Acting Surgeon.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

CHESELDEN AND LITHOTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Although Cheselden has been dead upwards of 130 years, perhaps you may find space in your columns for some extracts from the minutes of meetings of the governors of St. George's Hospital relative to him and the performance of lithotomy. The first surgeons to that hospital were appointed on October 19th, 1733—viz., Amyand and Dickens (serjeant surgeons) and Mr. Wilkie; and on the 22nd Cheselden, then surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital and lithotomist to the Westminster (then Infirmary) Hospital, was appointed surgeon also, and, as it would appear, solely to perform lithotomy; for at a court of governors held on April 1st, 1737, the minutes state:—"Mr. Cheselden, who had from the foundation of the hospital cut the patients for the stone, now desiring to resign, and proposing that another surgeon be chosen for that operation—resolved, that the thanks of the court be given to Mr. Cheselden for his great care and trouble in and about the operation aforesaid." It was then proposed that a court be called to supply his place, and on April 22nd "the court resolved, on the motion of Mr. Ranby, after proper consideration, that it would be of most advantage to the patients, and more to the credit of the hospital, that one only of the surgeons in ordinary be chosen to succeed him; thereupon Mr. David Middleton was unanimously chosen to succeed him. Mr. Middleton was called in, and accepted the office with thanks." At a court held on April 6th, 1745, "David Middleton, Esq., having informed the court that he desired to resign the particular operation for cutting for the stone, as confined to him, but to perform the same in his turn with the other surgeons of this house—ordered, that the consideration of proper persons to perform that operation be referred to the next court"; and on April 27th "it was ordered that the operation of cutting for the stone be left to such of the surgeons of this hospital as think proper to perform the same." Cæsar Hawkins, so eminent as a lithotomist, had then been ten years surgeon to the hospital. In 1864 I saw at an engraver's a plate of a portrait of Cheselden, and, on asking how it came there, I was informed that it had been sent to be destroyed by a relative who was affronted at the little interest taken by the medical profession in the memory of her ancestor. I requested leave to have an impression taken before the destruction, which was courteously granted me. The copy, taken one hundred and eleven years after the likeness was executed, I presented to the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, as well as one of his works containing his own autograph and that of Prout and Brodie. Cheselden was appointed surgeon to the Royal Hospital at Chelsea in 1737, where he died on April 10th, 1752. A handsome tomb was placed over his grave in the burial-ground of that hospital. On visiting it lately I found it fast going to decay: a little cutting of the stone might still preserve some memorial of this eminent surgeon. Next to him is buried Sir Everard Home, also surgeon to this hospital.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

Savile-row, August 4th, 1884.

CHARLES HAWKINS.

P.S.—I have presented to the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society H. Dekker's "*Exercitationes Practicæ*," edition 1695. At page 193 there is depicted an operation of removing a crushed calculus. I should like opinions as to what this operation was.

THE CHOLERA.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—The subject of cholera is of perennial moment, but it never was more so, we might say, than at the present juncture, in consequence of its prevalence in France. In reference to a letter published in your current issue by Dr. John Roche, retired list of Her Majesty's Indian Medical Service, it should be noted that the malarial view of its etiology is by no means a novel one, as it was forcibly brought under the notice of the profession by Dr. Scriven, retired list of the Indian Medical Service, as long back as 1866 (*vide*