

**HEALTH OF THE HONG KONG GARRISON.**—The unseasonable weather has been the cause of a good deal of sickness in the garrison, the prevailing diseases being fevers and bowel and chest complaints. There have been four deaths since the departure of the last mail; three in the 59th regiment—two from consumption, one from dropsy, and one from fever in the Ceylon Rifle detachment. The following number of sick are in the several hospitals:—Ordnance, 12; 59th regiment, 75; Ceylon Rifles, 16; Gun Lascars, 5; total, 108.

**A LEGACY TO A MEDICAL JOURNAL.**—A very brilliant example of deep gratitude to a medical periodical has just been given in France. A medical man, who had for the last twenty-five years been a subscriber to the *Gazette des Hôpitaux* (and who seems to have retired with a handsome competency), has just bestowed upon the journal £400 a-year. The money is to be expended in the following way:—£120 to the authors of the best practical articles published in the *Gazette des Hôpitaux*. This sum is to be distributed under the control of the donor himself; £280 to be used annually to grant subscriptions to the paper at a reduced rate to those practitioners who cannot afford the full price—200 subscriptions to be reduced by one-third, 200 by one half, and 100 by two-thirds. We can hardly find fault with such generous donations, but suspect that the proposed arrangement will give rise to abuse, be misapplied, and fail to lead to the end kept in view by the donor. It is within the recollection of all, that Orfila died very soon after his munificent legacies to the profession.

**HEALTH OF LONDON DURING THE WEEK ENDING Saturday, January 28.**—THE number of deaths registered in the metropolitan districts in the week that ended on Saturday, was 1178. This amount differs little from the number returned in the previous week. In the ten corresponding weeks of the years 1844-53, the average number was 1086, which, if a certain proportion is added for increase of population, becomes 1195. The actual number of last week nearly coincides with the calculated amount. In the four weeks of January the following were the numbers of deaths registered: 1444, 1492, 1195, and 1178, showing a continual decrease during the last three. In the same periods the mean temperature rose as follows: 30.2°, 37.5°, 42.2°, and 42°. Deaths from zymotic or epidemic diseases declined in the last two weeks from 253 to 230; those from the class of pulmonary complaints were in the same times 250 and 242. The number dying from these latter has now fallen below the average, while fever and diseases incidental to children are in the aggregate about as fatal as is usual at this season. Six deaths are referred to small-pox, 19 to measles, 35 to scarlatina, 55 to whooping-cough, 4 to croup, one to thrush, 30 to diarrhoea, 3 to dysentery, 2 to influenza, 3 to remittent fever, one to infantile fever, 51 to typhus, 4 to metria or puerperal fever (besides 4 others that occurred after childbirth), 3 to rheumatic fever, 9 to erysipelas, 4 to syphilis.

## Obituary.

**THE LATE R. A. STAFFORD, ESQ.**—In our obituary of this day we have to record the decease of this much-respected gentleman, whose name is familiar to most of our readers, not only from his family connexion with this neighbourhood, but also from the high reputation which he has for many years enjoyed as a metropolitan surgeon. He was the third son of the late Rev. Egerton Stafford, vicar of Chacombe and rector of Thenford, in the county of Northampton; and having completed his medical education at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, he afterwards filled the office of house-surgeon to that institution. As the author of several works on surgery, and as the ingenious inventor of many useful instruments for the performance of surgical operations, all tending to the relief of suffering humanity, he soon gained a high position in the medical profession, being surgeon to the St. Marylebone Infirmary, a Fellow, and for some time a Member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Surgeon Extraordinary to his late Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, by whom he was held in much esteem. Mr. Stafford obtained the Jacksonian prize of the Royal College of Surgeons in the year 1826; he was a frequent contributor of valuable papers and communications connected with his profession to the medical periodicals. He died, almost in the prime of life, and unmarried; but he has left a name which will long be favourably known in the annals of medical science.—*Banbury Guardian*.

Died, at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, on the 25th ultimo, Mr. JOHN RICHARD DAVERN, Surgeon.

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## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**Mr. Marshall, (Maidstone).**—The samples were entirely free from copper. The practice referred to, of imparting to bottled and preserved fruits and vegetables a bright green colour by means of a poisonous salt of copper, still prevails extensively. Nothing can be more pernicious than this practice; it has, however, received a considerable check by the publication of the Reports of the Analytical Sanitary Commission on this subject. One firm we know, that of Messrs. Crosse and Blackwell, whose establishment is the most extensive of any engaged in this branch of trade, has gone to a very considerable expense in fitting up a large silver vessel, as well as several steam-pans, which latter are lined with a thick coating of glass enamel, for the preparation of their various manufactures; thus taking every precaution to guard against the contact with copper. The difference in the appearance of fruits and vegetables which are artificially coloured by this means, and those which have not had any colouring matter added, is very great—so striking indeed, that a practised eye can readily distinguish the one from the other. The former are of a bright and almost metallic-green hue, much deeper than that of the recent fruit; while the latter are of a pale, yellowish-green colour, the tint varying with the nature of the fruit or vegetable preserved. As to the difference in the wholesomeness of the two articles, there can be but a single opinion, while, in our estimation, the appearance in the uncoloured sample is much the most pleasing and natural. The reckless manner in which poisonous pigments are employed in articles of diet, merely for the sake of colour, is in the highest degree reprehensible, and calls for active interference on the part of Government. The disclosures contained in the Report of the "Analytical Sanitary Commission" on "Poisonous Coloured Sugar Confectionary," which will shortly be published, will furnish some remarkable examples in corroboration of the above remarks.

**DR. MUSPRATT'S "PRACTICAL CHEMISTRY."**

*To the Editor of THE LANCET.*

SIR,—I am probably inadequate to the task of answering with effect the observations in *THE LANCET* of the 21st ult., which in your notice of the published part of this work are made to apply to me; but you will pardon me attempting to do both you and me justice.

You decline reviewing the work, because the publisher has sought to influence your critical judgment by forwarding for your *private* information the opinions of some of the most eminent chemists of the day pronounced on the publication. This remark can only apply to the printed sheet of notices, which are now in course of circulation inside of, and along with, the current part of the work, and the favourable notices of which I have pride and satisfaction in acknowledging; but believe me that sheet was not meant for your *private* information or use; on the contrary, had I conceived that the slightest interference with your province as a critic was implied, the sheet would have been studiously kept back.

You will allow me to add, that I courted the usual candour of *THE LANCET* in any notice of the work which you might have thought fit to give. I would have desisted to ask a favourable review, if you conceived the work undeserving public patronage, and I have abundant confidence in your honour that you would not have withheld your approval if such were your real sentiments. On no other footing were the parts transmitted, and on that footing alone will they continue to be sent, if you will allow me the privilege of doing so.

I have pleasure in expressing the hope that no independent journalist will suffer his critical judgment to be guided by the opinions of another; and that it will not be deemed beneath the character of a respectable publisher, if, while he covets the good opinion of *THE LANCET* for his publication, he dares to scorn the imputation that he attempted to tamper with the sound discretion which deservedly characterizes its reviews.

Will you allow me space sufficient for this letter in your next number?

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WILLIAM MACKENZIE,  
Printer and Publisher of Dr. Muspratt's  
"Practical Chemistry."

Glasgow, Jan. 1854.

**Mr. E. W. Lowe**, of Congleton, has not disproved any one of the allegations advanced by "Spectator." The feelings of our correspondent do him credit; but he may be assured that *THE LANCET* and its advocates are at this time engaged in exposing one of the foulest conspiracies that ever was formed or instigated, and it is our fixed determination not to desist until that exposure be complete. It was not enough to discover that such a conspiracy existed, but the authors of it must be known. The security of the honour and respectability of the profession demands that this duty should be fearlessly discharged.