

corresponding rise in the rate of births; a coincidence of very general observation, and one not difficult to understand. The death-rate experienced by about eleven millions of people inhabiting the large town districts was 22·4 per 1000, while the residual nine millions dwelling in the small towns and country parishes paid a diminished toll of 17 per 1000, as a consequence rather of their sparse distribution allowing the free action of the purifying air of the country to neutralise unhealthy influences, than of the absence of those unhealthy conditions themselves.

The non-recurrence of epidemic cholera places the statistics of mortality for the last quarter in favourable contrast to those of the previous summer. This is especially noticeable, for example, in Liverpool, where there is a reduction of 22, and in London of 9 deaths per 1000. On the other hand, the prevalence of diarrhoea, or of scarlatina, has raised the mortality of Birmingham 6½ per 1000, of Hull 3, and of Manchester, 1. London and Bristol present two remarkable instances of a comparatively low death-rate attainable among large populations closely packed together; their citizens died at the rate of 21 and 19 per 1000 respectively. The unhealthy condition of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, "with its numerous unpaved streets, its cellars, and underground kitchens standing seven or eight inches under water and liquid filth" (as described in a recent report) is apparent in a mortality of nearly 30 per 1000; notwithstanding the sanitary improvements instituted by the newly-appointed Health Committee, zymotic diseases have been fatally prevalent, and in one part of the town the excessive proportion of 147 out of a total of 229 deaths occurred among children not exceeding five years of age. It is gratifying to look upon a very different picture presented by the western city of Salisbury, where the mortality ruled in the ten years 1851-60 at an annual average of 24 per 1000, but where good hygienic arrangements have borne fruit in the remarkably low annual average of 10 deaths per 1000 in the last quarter,—"a result as creditable to the authorities as it is satisfactory to the citizens, whose years of life are prolonged."

There was an increased mortality last quarter in the South Midland, West Midland, North Midland, and Northern counties, and in Yorkshire, as compared with the same season of last year: in all the other groups there was a decrease, amounting in the Welsh division to nearly 5 per 1000.

Summer diarrhoea prevailed to a considerable extent, as did also scarlatina, typhus and typhoid fevers, and measles; the localities where these diseases abounded may be gathered from the notes appended to the return from the various local registrars.

The prevalence of small-pox is noted at Aldershot, and several cases occurred at Frimley, but none of these were fatal. Deaths occurred from this disease at Milton, Shoreham, Alverstoke, Wisbech, West Ham, Great Ilford, Westleton, Congleton, Liverpool, Wigan, Manchester, Dalton, Chapeltown, Sheffield, Doncaster, and Sculcoates.

Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

STUDY OF ANATOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—We are forming, as the Undergraduate of King's College wishes, and as we have done in former years, a class for descriptive anatomy, and we trust the feeling he expresses in your last week's number is sufficiently strong in him and others to induce them, not only to join it, but to remain during part at least of their vacations, for the purpose of continuing their anatomical studies. The terms are too short and the vacations too long to enable us, in the period actually prescribed by the University, to get through well all that ought to be done. Residence in the vacations is voluntary; but we hope the medical students will emulate their hard-working brethren in the University, who stay up and read during a considerable part of the vacations. They will find these afford the very best times for attendance on practical anatomy and hospital practice; and we shall be only too glad to extend, as we have been in the habit of doing, the period of our teaching.

We are, Sir, yours obediently,

G. M. HUMPHRY, Professor of Anatomy.

E. CARVER, Demonstrator of Anatomy.

Cambridge, Oct. 28, 1867.

THE BICHLORIDE OF METHYLENE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—I employed the new anæsthetic in two cases at the Queen's Hospital this morning, and forward the notes, dictated at the time to one of my dressers (Mr. E. Smith):—

CASE 1.—Edwin A.—, aged forty. Fistula in ano. While lying on table, just before proceeding, pulse 96, small. At eleven A.M., our resident physician, Dr. Temple Wright, commenced the administration with two drachms of the bichloride of methylene (Robbins & Co.) on a towel. Three minutes past eleven, pulse 112, fuller; another drachm. Five minutes past, slight muscular rigidity; pulse 120, smaller. Seven minutes past, another drachm. Eight minutes past, apparently insensible, but wakes up on introducing probe; rather violent muscular spasm follows; another drachm. Nine minutes past, spasm more violent; another drachm. In one more minute, ten minutes from first inhalation, I divided the fistula. Insensibility complete; recovery very satisfactory.

CASE 2.—John K.—, a very feeble child, aged ten weeks. Double hare-lip. Pulse 96; but counted with difficulty before inhalation. Thirty-two minutes past eleven, one drachm of the bichloride, on a pledget of lint, held near uncovered face with a pair of forceps. Thirty-four minutes past eleven, another drachm. Thirty-five minutes past, apparently insensible, but wakes up on touching with point of scalpel; another drachm given. Immediately afterwards insensibility was complete. The deformity being unusually marked, I dissected off the skin from intermaxillary projection, broke this off, dissected cheeks from bone rather freely, pared the edges, and brought them together; another drachm of the agent given during the operation. The anæsthetic effects in both cases fully bear out Dr. Richardson's discovery; the infant's case was in every respect most satisfactory. Probably the adult also would have had no spasm, if I had allowed a few more seconds before introducing the probe.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

Birmingham, Oct. 30, 1867.

SAMPSON GAMGEE.

THE FARNHAM WORKHOUSE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—There being a very strong feeling in Farnham that I was cognisant of, and in some way accessory to, the visit of your Commissioners to the Farnham Workhouse, will you kindly put it in my power to contradict it in the most unqualified manner, as you are aware that I was utterly ignorant of any such intention. I think such a contradiction absolutely necessary for me to be in possession of for the forthcoming inquiry.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

W. EDWARD POWELL,

Medical Officer of the Farnham Workhouse.

Farnham, Oct. 28th, 1867.

* * Our Commissioners have already communicated to the guardians a formal notice that Dr. Powell was entirely ignorant of their intention to visit Farnham Workhouse, and that they had no acquaintance with him whatever.—ED. L.

BORDIER'S CASE.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Although I take in THE LANCET, I did not see until this day the letter by Dr. H. Tuke on "Monomania and Homicide," of October the 12th, in which he discusses the case of Bordier; and as he has incorrectly stated what relates to me,—I am sure quite unintentionally,—I feel called upon, in justice to myself, to make some remarks.

After commenting upon the evidence of Dr. Simpson, Dr. Tuke goes on to say, "Two other medical witnesses were called, one of them the surgeon of the gaol. The evidence of these gentlemen was simply negative; they had daily seen the prisoner since his committal, but had discerned no indication of insanity; they had not examined him as to any alleged delusion, nor as to the causes or circumstances of the murder." This statement as regards myself is incorrect. When I gave my evidence on the trial, the question was not put to me as to whether I had examined him in reference to the murder, and I did not proffer the information; hence the fact did not appear. But, during the few days he was in Newgate gaol, I examined him repeatedly on the subject of the murder, in