

ACCORDING to a correspondent of the *Daily News*, the deaths in Paris during the week ending December 17th amounted to 2728—a mortality not inaptly characterised as appalling when we remember that in London, with a million more inhabitants than Paris, 2000 deaths in a week would be regarded as indicative of excessive unhealthiness.

THE Odd Fellows lodge at Chorley, with which the late Mr. Robert Taylor was for many years connected as medical officer, have placed on the records of the lodge their unanimous regret at losing so valued an adviser and friend, and their sympathy with the bereaved family.

MR. R. R. HARPER, son of Mr. Harper, surgeon, of Holbeach, was the successful competitor for the gold medal annually given by the Prince of Wales to the Lynn Grammar School, and he had the honour of receiving the prize from the hands of his Royal Highness.

THE medical officers of the North and South Dublin Unions have presented a testimonial to Dr. Maunsell, in appreciation of his services in the cause of the Poor-law medical officers of Ireland.

#### SMALL-POX AT THE LONDON HOSPITALS.

WITHIN the last few weeks about fifteen cases of small-pox have been under treatment at the London Hospital. The disease had declared itself in each instance after the admission of the patient; in some cases the patients must have been admitted for other affections during the period of incubation; in others, while suffering from the preliminary fever; while it is supposed that others must have caught the infection from visitors to the wards, an opinion which is exceedingly probable, considering the prevalence of small-pox in Whitechapel and Shoreditch. Each case, as soon as it was detected, was removed to a ward which is situated in the hospital grounds, and completely isolated from the main building; and as beds from time to time became vacant, the bedding belonging to them was immediately burned. Only two deaths occurred, and these were in the case of patients whose health had been seriously impaired by previous illness. At present the hospital is quite free from this disease, and, to guard against a fresh outbreak, all visits from patients' friends have been interdicted. The London Hospital possesses twenty-two beds, completely isolated from the main building, and measures which will shortly double this number are now being taken, not with a view to admitting cases from outside, but in order to provide increased accommodation for any further cases of infectious disease that may arise in the hospital.

The accounts from St. Bartholomew's Hospital are much less favourable, and, indeed, indicate a condition which is full of peril, and which, under less pressing circumstances, would be obviously unjustifiable. The first person attacked here was one of the sisters; she was removed from her room adjoining the ward to a house which, with the exception of one room which is used by the reverend the assistant hospitaler, was unoccupied, and is one of a row of narrow houses which, in front, form the entire side of a street, and open backwards into the hospital grounds; they accommodate the warden of the college and his family, the house-surgeons and house-physicians, about thirty resident students, the college maniple, and a staff of waiters and female servants. In addition to the above-mentioned sister, five patients—three of whom came from the same wing as the sister, but from other wards—have been transferred to this house; and although there exists no internal means of communication between it and the adjoining ones, the danger of converting it into a small-pox hospital did not long remain without a sufficiently terrible demonstration. First the college butler was attacked; he was immediately removed, but died in the course of a few days. Next one of the waiters,

who was also removed and has not as yet succumbed. We now learn that one of the resident students also, the day after his return home for the Christmas recess, was found to be suffering from small-pox. We are not prepared to believe that three persons resident in the college building were thus attacked independently of the focus of infection which has been created in its midst; nor will it be easy to persuade us that a more active and intelligent administration would not have devised some better means of disposing of the first-mentioned patients, although we are aware of the crowded condition of the special Fever Hospital. We fear, indeed, that we are strictly accurate in stating that this impotent attempt at isolation was made, not only without the advice of the hospital staff, but that, up to a very recent date, these gentlemen had not been apprised either collectively or individually of the extent to which small-pox had spread within the hospital bounds. At St. Bartholomew's also, the wards are closed to the friends of patients.

### Correspondence.

"Audi alteram partem."

#### THE LANCET MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—At a meeting of the Committee of the Manchester Medico-Ethical Association, held on the 22nd inst., THE LANCET Medical Bill was brought up (on report of Subcommittee, appointed Dec. 1st) for consideration. The following resolutions were passed, and we have been requested to forward to you a copy of them for insertion in your journal.

"1. That the draft of a Bill to amend the Medical Act of 1858, published in THE LANCET of Nov. 26th, embodies the views and wishes of this Committee on the subject, excepting as regards the composition of the Medical Council and the prosecution of offenders against the Act.

"2. That this Committee is of opinion that the Medical Council should be composed of representatives of the State and the general profession only.

"3. That this Committee is of opinion that the prosecution of offenders against the Act should be obligatory on the Medical Council, on satisfactory proof being laid before it of the existence of such. Further, that the paragraph in Clause 29 preventing private individuals from prosecuting except with the consent of the Council should be expunged.

"4. That this Committee suggests the insertion in Clause 29, after the words 'or any branch of medicine or surgery,' of the following, 'or make any representation or assumption which a magistrate or jury shall consider as meant to imply that he is a qualified practitioner,' he shall, &c.

"5. That this Committee considers that the Editor of THE LANCET is entitled to the cordial thanks of the profession for the Bill which he has framed."

We would further remark that it was very generally felt by the Committee that the general features and more important provisions of the Bill are such as to deserve the hearty support of the profession, and that the passing of such a Bill, particularly with the emendations suggested, would tend in an eminent degree to elevate the status of the profession, scientifically and socially, and to settle for many years to come the question of "Medical Reform."

We are, Sir, yours obediently,

JAMES HARDIE, }  
C. H. BRADDON, } Hon. Secs.

Manchester, Dec. 27th, 1870.

#### NAVAL PROMOTIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—And so, Mr. Editor, Venus counts another triumph over Mars.

"Venus Damnosa"—not she of modest mien, but she who gives cause for Contagious Disease Acts that shock the sense of decency of some of our fellow-citizens—has