

Dr. H. D. McCULLOCH (Kashmir) pointed out that the people in the valleys in Kashmir lived on fish throughout the year, both fresh and smoked, though perhaps not salted. These people did not suffer particularly from leprosy. The mountaineers were the people who afforded the cases of leprosy, and they lived chiefly on milk and vegetable food, fish being difficult, in fact almost impossible, for the mountaineers to get.

Dr. PHINEAS ABRAHAM said that it seemed to him that Mr. Hutchinson had made up his mind to welcome the smallest tittle of evidence in favour of his fish theory, but to view with scepticism anything that might be advanced against it. Dr. Abraham was particularly anxious to ask Mr. Hutchinson what was meant in the report of his address in the daily papers by the statement attributed to Mr. Hutchinson that on the whole the Commission on Leprosy were favourable to his fish theory.

Mr. HUTCHINSON explained that he said that the Commission gave a somewhat unfavourable opinion upon the fish theory based upon the fact that in the leper asylums there were a certain number of lepers who denied ever having eaten fish; but nevertheless, though they returned a somewhat adverse verdict, yet on the whole they were favourable to it.

Dr. ABRAHAM said that on page 339 of the report of the Commission there were the following words: "In the opinion of the Commission, there was no doubt that the consumption of fish is not the cause of leprosy." He thought that Mr. Hutchinson should communicate with the press concerning the matter. Dr. Abraham concluded by asking how Mr. Hutchinson could account for the diminution of leprosy in Norway, where fish was eaten as much as ever.

Mr. HUTCHINSON explained that it must be due to the fact that the Norwegians were curing their fish better.

Dr. C. J. S. HANCOCK (Assam) said that leprosy was very prevalent in Upper Assam under the Himalayas among all classes, and fish was obtainable by them all the year round.

Dr. VAN DAM (British Guiana) said that leprosy was rampant in that region and increasing day by day, and the consumption there of rotten fish was also very great and was increasing. There was no doubt that the population there was fed on tainted salt fish.

Dr. CUNNINGHAM AFFLECK having addressed the meeting,

The CHAIRMAN (Dr. Crocker) pointed out that until the fish in question was investigated and the lepra bacillus demonstrated there was little use in carrying on discussions. If Mr. Hutchinson contended that leprosy was not contagious then he had undertaken a very heavy task, because with a disease that was undoubtedly bacillary strong evidence was required to prove that it was not contagious.

Mr. HUTCHINSON said that the Chairman had asked for more than proof in requiring actual demonstration of the bacillus in fish, but in Mr. Hutchinson's opinion many things could be proved and were proved before they were demonstrated. In regard to the mountaineers of Kashmir furnishing so many cases of leprosy, and the people in the valleys, where fish was eaten furnishing so few cases, he pointed out that a parallel existed in the case of South Africa, where the agricultural labourers fed in the harvest season with salt fish from Cape Town developed leprosy, but the boatmen who caught the fish and ate it fresh were practically exempt. Mr. Hutchinson concluded his remarks by suggesting that the Standing Committee should continue to encourage investigations, and should have an early meeting to draw up certain questions to be sent to medical men in India for information on the subject of leprosy. Parliament and the public should be appealed to for funds to investigate the fish supply with a view to finding the bacillus.

The proceedings then terminated.

AMERICAN ELECTRO-THERAPEUTIC SOCIETY.—The American Electro-Therapeutic Society was founded in 1890, and held its first annual meeting in 1891. The last annual meeting (the twelfth) was held in 1902, when the question of the use of the x rays in the treatment of malignant disease bulked large in the programme. At the next annual meeting, which is to be held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on September 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, 1903, the same subject will also occupy a prominent place. The activity and practical usefulness of the Association are evidenced by the fact that the name of some member has been more or less intimately connected with nearly every electro-therapeutical discovery or development of the last twenty years. The Association is the oldest of its kind in existence.

ASSOCIATION OF CERTIFYING FACTORY SURGEONS.

THE annual meeting of this Association was held on May 22nd at the Hotel Cecil, London, and was well attended by certifying surgeons from all parts of the country. The retiring President, Dr. T. F. YOUNG, of Liverpool, took the chair.

The HONORARY SECRETARY gave a statement of the work of the Association during the year, the most important having been the reviewing of the report of the Home Office Committee on Industrial Accidents. The report of Committee on the Conditions of Ventilation in Factories was also referred to, as well as the promise made at the Manchester meeting of the British Medical Association that the factory surgeons' organization would investigate this particular question. The advisability of defining "slight" and "severe" in their relation to factory accidents, and the making of some general rules for the guidance of surgeons when making their examinations for certificates of fitness were also brought to the notice of the meeting.

DRS. KEAY, BRASSEY BRIERLEY, ERDINGTON, HOLMES, FORT, and C. F. MOORE took part in the discussion on the report.

Dr. T. F. Young was unanimously re-elected to the office of President, as were also Drs. T. Watts and W. F. Dearden to the positions of Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary respectively. The Corresponding Secretaries were elected as follows: Scotland, Dr. Alex. Campbell, of Dundee; Ireland, Dr. Chas. F. Moore, of Dublin; London, Dr. Oxley. Drs. R. Patrick and J. C. Eames again became the Auditors for the year.

The annual dinner took place in the evening at the Hotel Cecil, London. The principal guest was to have been the Home Secretary, but in his unavoidable absence his place was well filled by Sir Kenelm Digby, the permanent Under-Secretary for Home Affairs. Fully 100 took their places at table, and this number included a goodly sprinkling of guests drawn from amongst those who have gained more or less distinction in connexion with factory legislation or administration. Parliament was well represented by Sir W. E. M. Tomlinson, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir J. Batty Tuke, Sir Michael Foster, Sir F. S. Powell, the Right Hon. C. H. Hemphill, K.C., Mr. J. H. Whiteley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Chapman, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. McIver, and Mr. Houl; Mr. Cunynghame, Mr. Murdoch, and Mr. Troup from the Home Office; Dr. Whitelegge, Dr. Legge, and several of the principal inspectors from the Factory Office, with Professor Thorpe, Dr. T. Oliver, Dr. Dawson Williams, Mr. W. Burton, Mr. G. A. Grindle, Mr. H. Dreschfeld, and the Mayor of Greenwich assisted in making the gathering representative.

After the usual loyal toasts had been duly honoured, the PRESIDENT (Dr. T. F. Young) proposed the toast of "The Home Department of His Majesty's Government." In giving expression to the universal regret at the absence of the Home Secretary, he pointed out that members had foregathered from the furthest corners of the British Isles for the purpose of meeting the supreme head of the department in social intercourse, and not to have their expectations realized was a great disappointment. Factory surgeons, as a body, were getting away from their former position of isolation, and year by year came more into contact with the responsible representatives of the various branches of factory administration; he therefore felt justified in expressing his conviction that it only needed the presence of Mr. Akers-Douglas that evening finally to cement and consolidate the bond already existing. He asked Sir Kenelm Digby to convey his assurance of the pleasure Mr. Akers-Douglas's presence would have given to his hosts, and that it was the earnest hope of all that his health and strength would soon be restored to the fullest extent. In dealing with the toast he drew particular attention to the fact that the newspapers, whilst continually criticizing other departments, had so very little fault to find with the efficiency of the Home Office, and gave it as his opinion that this could only be regarded as a proof of the universal confidence of the public in those who were responsible for this branch of administration. He thought it a matter for great congratulation that, in this age of reformation, not one attempt had been made to reform the Home Office. His particular experience had been gained in factory administration, and he could confidently vouch, from his own personal knowledge, for the all-round efficiency of that Department. It was a department that was not "marking time," but was one of the most progressive in this most evolutionary era. He went on to state that the wealth of nations lay in the number of the healthy units constituting their

populations, and that the time was now present when those responsible for the general welfare fully realized that this was not the worst heritage they had got. Out of early work, unhealthy occupation, unfenced machinery, disease, and death had been evolved the Factory Acts, and it is justly the due of those directing their administration to be regarded as amongst our greatest national benefactors.

Sir KENELM DIGBY, in responding, echoed the wish expressed by the Chairman that the Home Secretary could have been present. A family bereavement, the pressure of official work, and the fact that he had only just got out of the doctor's hands, had been instrumental in preventing his coming amongst them, but he was certain that nothing would have given Mr. Akers-Douglas greater pleasure than to have been able to take his allotted place that evening. He went on to refer to the President's flattering eulogy of the Home Office, which, if he had only a free hand, would undoubtedly have had the effect of carrying him away with enthusiasm in his endeavours to respond suitably. He was, however, not disinclined to accept Dr. Young's view respecting the universality of interest involved, though the department, as at present existing, could only be regarded as a relic of a great institution whose functions had been gradually encroached upon by newer and more grasping departments. Certain important functions had, nevertheless, been left to them. They exercised a beneficent supervision over the life of the subject from his birth to his death; they saw that he behaved himself properly when on this earth and that he was correctly buried when he was dead, and if any misfortune landed him into prison they carefully attended to him whilst there, and duly liberated him on the expiration of his sentence. Not the least beneficent supervision, however, was that placed in the hands of the particular branch of the department which was represented there that evening. It was certainly one of their most important branches, and it would be hard to find another so far-reaching in its facilities for doing good. He was glad at being afforded the opportunity of coming into contact with so many of its representatives.

Professor C. J. WRIGHT took charge of the next toast, "The Factory Department of the Home Office." He referred to the occasion as the first on which the principal officials of the Home Office had come into such close contact with the particular branch of their department which he had the honour to speak for that evening, a branch which he thought he could safely style as more useful than ornamental. Though constituting a trades-union they had never been on strike, but were a body of working men only too proud to glorify themselves in their association with the powers that be. He was pleased to note the great interest shown by Dr. Whitelegge in the certifying surgeon, though he found as a result that the work increased whilst the pay did not. Whilst admitting that the occasion did not provide the proper time and place to refer to such matters, he ventured to think that with such an obliging Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, by the way, had only recently left the Home Office, the prerogative of mercy which had been so gracefully brought into play in other directions might be extended to an able body of workers whose constant wish was to support the Home Office in every possible way. He referred to the association with Dr. Whitelegge, of Professor Thorpe and Dr. Oliver, and the manner in which, under their fostering influence, not only mural decorations but pottery, dresses, and even table beer had been supervised for the public good. He noted that the physical degeneracy of our race was a common subject of comment, and said that, though the particular work in connexion with his University Chair had rather to do with the coming race, he regarded it as a proper connexion in so far as it enabled him to speak with authority on the need for further supervision of women employed too soon after confinement.

Dr. WHITELEGGE, in returning thanks, lightly referred to the friendly nature of the criticism to which he had been subjected. He acknowledged that the work of the department was ever on the increase, and instanced that, besides the large number of factories mentioned by Dr. Young, buildings, docks, and even ships had been included within their operations. With the greater amount of detail required the work became harder every year, but it was always the endeavour to get through with it without fear or favour. Certifying surgeons had an Association which he was glad to say was growing, and he realized to the full the value of the work accomplished by it. He was also pleased to note the increase in the standard of the men who came forward to fill the vacancies as they arose. He would therefore assure them that if more and more was asked from them such was not done without thought,

but had for its incentive a real desire for information. He alluded to the importance of ventilation in factories and workshops, to the manner in which the spread of phthisis was bound up with it, and to the important fact that, under the Act of 1891, a statutory standard of ventilation could be secured. Referring to the Manchester meeting of the British Medical Association, he mentioned the great pleasure it had afforded him to preside over the new and important Section of Industrial Hygiene, and to the great amount of good likely to accrue from the excellent quality of the papers and discussions connected therewith. He gave expression, with marked emphasis, to the sincere hope that factory work would never be any the worse for the medical influence brought to bear on it. Going on to the subject of accidents, he stated that in spite of the annual number having risen to 90,000, statistics did not and could not give any indication of the numbers prevented, though it was undoubtedly that, great as the increase in numbers must be, the number prevented must still be greater still in proportion. He stated that certifying surgeons might be considered as a body of self-sacrificing men who were destroying their opportunities for usefulness through their own efficiency, instancing the diminution in the number of cases of industrial poisoning as a result of the supervision placed in their hands. At the same time he expressed his conviction that this could not be allowed to go on without proper recognition from the Home Office. Speaking of dangerous trades, he noted the general increase of activity in connexion therewith of recent years, the extension of the work, the more intelligible nature of the rules leading to their being better understood by those engaged in the processes, and to the undoubtedly beneficial results. He thought that as the certifying surgeon was brought more into contact with this class of work he would be enabled to exercise a greater and certainly more beneficial control over children and young persons working at a dangerous employment.

Dr. WHITELEGGE concluded his remarks by proposing the toast of the "Association of Certifying Factory Surgeons," and this was suitably responded to by Dr. YOUNG.

INFANTILE MORTALITY IN RELATION TO MILK SUPPLY.

THE series of articles on the milk supply of large towns, which has been appearing in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, are an index of our sense of the importance of a pure milk supply as a means of reducing infantile mortality. The most unfavourable feature in the sanitary history of the last 40 years is the fact that the infantile mortality has not been reduced; has, in fact, become on the average higher than it was. This is clearly indicated by the following table:

England and Wales.

Period.	Annual Mortality of Infants under 1 year of Age to 1,000 Births.	Annual Death-rate from all Causes per 1,000 of Population.
1838-42	152	—
1847-50	154	—
1851-60	154	22.2
1861-70	154	22.5
1871-80	149	21.4
1881-90	142	19.1
1891-95	151	18.7
1896-99	157	17.6
1900... ..	154	18.2

Thus, comparing 1851-60 with 1896-99, we find that the infantile mortality has increased about 2 per cent., while the death-rate from all causes together has declined about 21 per cent. Clearly there is reason for profound dissatisfaction with the failure of infantile mortality to follow the rule of the general mortality. Some light is thrown on the causes of excessive infantile mortality by a statement of the local incidence in the counties of England. Thus, according to the Registrar-General's report for 1899, the infantile mortality varied from 106 per 1,000 births in Rutlandshire and 108 in Herefordshire to 191 in Lancashire. The order of the counties, beginning with the one having the lowest infantile mortality, was as follows: