

epidemic diseases was lower, mainly in consequence of a reduction in the number of deaths from infantile diarrhoea. A decrease in the cases of measles was neutralized by a material increase in the deaths attributable to whooping-cough. Typhus fever was substantially reduced, and, contrary to the experience of recent years, it occurred to a less extent in the rural than in the urban districts. The incidence of typhoid fever in rural districts increased, the counties principally affected being Kerry, Galway, Limerick, and Mayo. The increase is attributed to the prevalence of shallow open wells, insufficiently protected against surface pollution, or to pump wells to which drainage from refuse dumps or otherwise may gain access. In some districts the Schick test and toxin-antitoxin immunization against diphtheria have been introduced. During the year an approved scheme for the treatment of tuberculosis was started in Cork county borough, bringing the number of such schemes in the Free State to twenty-five. A system of tuberculosis dispensaries has been instituted; preliminary measures of the same kind are being taken in Limerick and the counties of Meath and Wicklow. For the treatment of tuberculous patients in the Free State 2,190 beds are specially assigned, and there are also 5,757 beds available for the reception of cases of this disease or of others. The sanatorium accommodation for early cases is in the proportion of one bed for each 3,500 of the population. In the course of the past five years there has been a substantial advance as regards the maternity services. Free midwifery and medical attendance in childbirth is provided for the poorer class of women under the medical charities system. In Dublin domiciliary attendance on midwifery cases is undertaken by the staffs of the maternity hospitals, which to a large extent replaces the services offered elsewhere under the medical charities system. It is recognized that further institutional accommodation is needed, and provision is now being made at county and district hospitals and county homes for all classes of maternity cases. No inquiry as regards the training of midwives has been considered necessary, but the results of the English inquiry are being closely studied with a view to applying its conclusions to the special circumstances and conditions of the Irish Free State. A model child welfare centre is operating in Dublin as a result of a grant from the Carnegie Trust; it is hoped that similar institutions will come into existence in other parts of the country. Its functions are purely preventive, and do not encroach upon the province of a children's hospital. A scheme of school medical inspection was introduced in Dublin at the beginning of 1928; in Cork such a scheme has already been in operation for four years, and the arrangements are more fully developed, thirty-nine schools being supervised. In Clonmel urban district a separate scheme of school medical services has been inaugurated by the corporation, with the approval of the Tipperary county council, part-time medical officers, specialists, and dental officers being employed.

Provision of a New Hospital in Lurgan.

Dr. J. McCloy, medical inspector to the Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs, recently opened a public inquiry in the Lurgan Workhouse in regard to the application of the Lurgan Board of Guardians for sanction to a loan of £40,000 for the reconstruction and equipping of the present workhouse buildings as a district hospital. Mr. James A. Pringle, K.C., in opening the case for the board of guardians, said that Lurgan Hospital could not be thought of as an ordinary country hospital. Three points could not be disputed: the present buildings were unsuitable and inadequate for the needs of the unions; if the submitted scheme was adopted the hospital would be brought up to date; and the cost of the alterations was quite within the limits of the board of guardians, the expense being small compared with the benefits which would accrue. The total valuation of the union was £176,429, and a penny in the £ produced £735. The borrowing powers of the guardians were £44,107, while £2,264 was already owing. The population of the union was 50,542. During the past four years the average yearly number of admissions to the hospital was 1,685 patients. In 1929, 540 operations were performed, the majority of

these being of a major nature. Twenty-eight out of the thirty-eight guardians in the union were in favour of the scheme before it was launched. Mr. Pringle pointed out that Lurgan had an excellent water supply and a good sewerage scheme; it was excellently situated for a hospital, and it had first-rate surgeons. If the hospital were reconstructed the town supply of electric light would be installed in it.

Meat Inspection in Dublin.

Alleging that meat inspection by the veterinary inspectors of the public health department of the Dublin Corporation was pushed to an excessive extent, a firm of bacon curers recently closed their factory temporarily and dismissed their employees. Dr. Dwyer, one of the city commissioners, in the course of a statement issued by him, compared the condemnations in the case of this factory (0.103 per cent.) with the figure for Canada in 1928 (0.27 per cent. of the total kill) and with two of the largest South of Ireland factories in competition with that firm (0.2 and 0.25 per cent. respectively). Dr. Dwyer pointed out that the inspection of all meat was necessary for the health of the country, and that the inspection of meat for export protected the farmers from the fate of the Continental producers of pork—namely, total exclusion from the English market. All the meat inspectors were fully qualified veterinary surgeons, possessing higher qualifications than any other meat inspection staff he knew. The bacon factory has again been reopened, and, in connexion therewith, Dr. M. J. Russell, medical officer of health for Dublin, has issued a statement assuring the public that the arrangement under which the factory had decided to reopen did not involve any relaxation whatever of the standard of inspection by the corporation veterinary inspectors in this factory and any other factory, slaughterhouse, or shop where food was prepared for human consumption. Dr. Russell added that the demand for inspection by fully qualified inspectors was becoming every year more exacting. It was insisted on by health authorities in all countries, and the good results which were bound to follow in the Free State would be reflected in benefit to the public health and in increased home and export trade.

Presentation to Dr. J. Campbell Hall.

Dr. James Campbell Hall, who has retired from the Monaghan County Hospital, was recently presented with a massive centrepiece, a purse of gold, and an illuminated album address, containing the names of 654 subscribers. Before the public meeting the Catholic Bishop of Clogher unveiled a mural tablet at the hospital recording Dr. Hall's services. In making the presentation the Bishop said they all desired to express their high appreciation of Dr. Hall's eminent services to their County Hospital, and through that institution to co. Monaghan. The gifts were but a small token of their grateful recognition of his services, and also of the high esteem and warm friendship in which he was universally held. For nearly forty years Dr. Hall had been in charge of the hospital, and it had been the predominant aim of his life to make it increasingly efficient for the great purpose for which it was established. Dr. Hall expressed warm thanks for the gift and the manner of its presentation.

Scotland.

Control of Lunacy and Mental Deficiency.

A CIRCULAR has been issued by the General Board of Control for Scotland, drawing attention to the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1929, in so far as these affect the administration of the Lunacy and Mental Deficiency Acts. The General Board of Control for Scotland will remain the central authority, but the functions of district boards of control, of parish councils, and of education authorities will be transferred to county councils and to town councils. Upon the latter will accordingly fall in future the provision and maintenance of institutional accommodation for lunatics and mental defectives, the arrangements for certification, the discovery of mental defectives within their respective areas, and the

provision for educable mental defectives between the ages of 5 and 16 years, activities which had been previously conducted by education authorities. It is suggested by the Board of Control that a special lunacy and mental deficiency committee should be appointed by each local authority; to this persons who are not members of the local authority, but whose experience is valuable, may be co-opted. The obligation to provide institutional accommodation for suitable cases, and also to provide for defectives sanctioned for residence under guardianship, is unconditional. Scotland is now divided for lunacy and mental deficiency purposes into twenty-seven lunacy districts, and the limits of these are defined in an appendix to the circular. Powers are given to two or more local authorities to combine in the maintenance of a district asylum or institution for mental defectives. It is pointed out, however, that the erection of institutions has been to a great extent at a standstill since the war, and that there is a clamant need for additional accommodation in Scotland for lunatics and mental defectives. Plans of new buildings and of alterations and additions, as well as combination agreements, still require to be submitted for the approval of the General Board, and in some instances for the approval of the Secretary of State, but local authorities are now given the power to borrow money for the purpose of meeting capital expenditure without the consent of the central department. A list of the Scottish Lunacy and Mental Deficiency Acts is given in the circular, which may be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office, 120, George Street, Edinburgh, price 1d.

The Character of Scottish Universities.

An address was delivered on January 14th by Dr. T. J. Mackie, professor of bacteriology in the University of Edinburgh, to the Institute of Public Administration, on the relationship of the University to public affairs; Mr. William J. Harvey, treasurer of the city, presided at this meeting. The lecturer said that the modern university was now essentially practical in its outlook on life, and was a training school for direct usefulness to the community. The universities were great scientific institutes, and their chairs were in a sense public offices, which had been founded by public-spirited persons with the object of promoting knowledge for the common good. It was an axiom of the present day that research in a university must be conjoined with teaching, and it was on the research side that the maximum possibilities in the general public service could be developed. The Government, public bodies, and industries were invoking more and more the services of the scientist and the investigator. In regard to medicine, new hospitals under the direct control of local authorities were now to supplement the voluntary hospitals, and the future might bring about vast changes in hospital organization. The question must soon arise in university centres as to what place the medical schools would take in this organization. The voluntary hospitals had in the past played a notable part in medical teaching, and had been great centres of medical progress, but the problem of the hospital had altered; it was now not so much related to diseased individuals as to the fight against disease itself. The question arose whether in university centres the hospitals of the future might be most effectively staffed, in the interests of the public, of medical education, and of research, by a whole-time medical personnel; medical staffing of hospitals would inevitably present a difficult problem in the future to public administrators. It must be remembered that clinics were nowadays only one element in medical care, for a hospital required considerable laboratory services in order to be effective. It was in these services that a medical school, with its existing laboratories, could most fully supplement the work of a hospital. While the care of the sick constituted a great palliative measure in public health administration, central and local authorities must regard the prevention of disease as the ultimate object of all public medical administration. Lack of knowledge barred the way to the realization of this ideal, and medical research should be realized as being one of the primary and greatest of public interests. Governing authorities should remember that every particle of assistance given to university medical schools indicated

the taking of a step further along the road towards the prevention of human disease. The Scottish universities were in some danger of losing their national character, although they were institutions with centuries of memorable history to inspire them. Every patriotic Scotsman would like to see these maintain and strengthen their great national traditions, for the universities must determine the general culture and intellectual life of the people. These universities should strain every effort to attract and concentrate in their teaching the highest of Scottish genius, in order to maintain their national character and to infuse into public life all that was best in Scottish nationality.

Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Some further statements about the working of the Glasgow Royal Infirmary in the past year, in addition to those at the annual meeting recorded in the *Journal* of January 18th (p. 126), were made at a meeting of the delegates of employee contributors held on January 11th, when Mr. James Macfarlane, LL.D., chairman of the managers, presided. Mr. Thomas M'Ghie, a member of the House Committee, in the course of a report, announced that the number of patients treated during the past year in the Royal Infirmary had numbered 17,035, an increase of 1,236 over those for 1928. The out-patient figure had risen to 102,188, an increase of 2,895 over that of the previous year. The sums received during the year from, or on behalf of, patients who had been in the Infirmary amounted to £2,147, and the subscriptions collected from employees in works had aggregated £29,691, an increase of £496 over the sum derived from this source in 1928. The general fund of annual subscriptions showed an increase of £732 over those of 1928, and the year's working had resulted in a small surplus of £579 of income over expenditure. It was stated, however, that there was an urgent need for increased income, because for some time past the Infirmary had been carried on by borrowing from the bank, a costly business; subscribers were asked, therefore, to send in their money earlier in the year, or even half-yearly or quarterly. It was also stated that the managers had had under consideration the question of carrying on or closing down some parts of the Infirmary in order to curtail expense, unless more subscriptions were received. This had, however, proved not to be necessary, but it was hoped that subscribers would respond still more liberally in the future.

England and Wales.

Harrison Memorial Lecture.

At a meeting of the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, on January 14th, the Harrison Memorial Lecture—founded to perpetuate the memory of Colonel Edward Frank Harrison, director of chemical warfare during the great war—was delivered by Mr. P. A. W. Self, B.Sc. The lecturer, in dealing with the education of the future research worker, expressed the view that, while it was desirable to include some science in elementary education, the time devoted to it should not be very considerable, nor be allowed to interfere with a sound general education in other subjects. Any science taught before matriculation should be directed to assisting the student to discover whether he possessed any ability for scientific accuracy and to giving him some idea of the enormous importance of science, its methods, and its progress. After the student had matriculated and was undergoing his purely scientific training, he should still avoid too early specialization. In these days, said Mr. Self, the boundaries of the so-called pure sciences were rapidly becoming less well defined and were almost disappearing in places. Research in physical chemistry, for example, demanded at least as good a knowledge of physics as of chemistry. The worker in physiological botany had to be a chemist and a physicist as well as a botanist; and the physicist must be a first-rate mathematician. He thought it desirable also that all research workers, particularly those engaged in applied sciences, should have a short business training, sufficient to afford a reasonable knowledge of ordinary business