

restriction in Germany, Austria, Italy, and some of our own colonies—for example, Canada. Under the Food and Drugs Acts they were compelled to prosecute poor hard-working farmers for having a small excess of water in their milk, sometimes through natural causes, while the wealthy, luxurious patent medicine vendor, who was making his ill-gotten thousands by deliberate fraudulent representations, was not touched. He moved that the County Council take steps to impress upon the Government the urgent necessity for amending the Food and Drugs Acts so as to include restrictions on the trade in secret remedies, and, this motion being unanimously carried, it was decided to communicate it to the Local Government Board and to the Association of County Councils.

SCHOOL SANITATION IN LEWIS.

A statement has been forwarded to the Secretary for Scotland on behalf of the Council of the Educational Institute of Scotland, dealing with the recent reports on education in the island of Lewis. Much of the matter in these reports, and in this statement founded upon them, is of little interest to medical men; but the question of the sanitation and water supply is referred to, and the practice apparently approved by the local medical officers. The institute is a powerful organization with a roll of 13,000, to whose efforts both education and its teachers owe a good deal. It has always strived to raise the efficiency of the education and of the teachers, and to ensure the provision of healthy schools; its report will, therefore, receive due consideration. The institute appointed a commission of its own members to visit the island and report on the educational condition, and in this report the findings were that the existing system of managing the schools was unsatisfactory and the staffing and salaries inadequate; that in almost every case the condition of school buildings as regards cleaning, water supply, sanitation, and disinfection was bad, and in some cases even dangerous. This was submitted to the Secretary for Scotland on July 26th, and the local school boards prepared a memorandum in reply controverting the damaging statements of the commissioners. To this memorandum the institute has again prepared a reply now submitted as a statement. This statement deals with numerous educational and administrative details, but the concluding portion of it is devoted to sanitary affairs. The statement claims that the commissioners, from their knowledge of school buildings and equipment, and from their experience in the work of administration, not to mention their possession of the senses of sight and smell, are quite as well qualified as the medical officers of Barvas, Lochs, and Uig to judge of the efficiency of the sanitary arrangements of schools. The statement of the three medical officers as evidence of effective sanitation was that "last year every school was treated at least once with cyllin, and this year and in future all will be so treated." The institute points out that the Departmental Memorandum on the Cleaning of Schools demands regular weekly, and in some matters daily, use of disinfectants; "the medical officers of Barvas, Lochs, and Uig are satisfied with an annual application. Need more be said." The institute insists that as a rule school premises were only brush cleaned and floors seldom washed. "At the visit of the commissioners there was visual evidence to this effect." As to the sanitary condition the institute "would gladly welcome further investigation by an independent commissioner, to whom it would be prepared to submit all documents, including signed statements by all the head teachers (except one) in the three parishes." The statement concludes:

In conclusion the institute would assure your lordship that its action in the matter of the island of Lewis was intended wholly to increase the efficiency of education, and to improve materially the position of both teachers and pupils. It therefore trusts that your lordship will take such action as will secure these ends.

In view of its dealings with those in authority in the island of Lewis and adjoining islands, and of the report on the sanitary affairs in the island by the medical officer of the Local Government Board a few years ago, it is probable that the independent report

suggested will be ordered either by the Secretary for Scotland or the Local Government Board. It is to be hoped in the interest of the children, and of the medical officers involved, that a thorough investigation into the whole conditions will be instituted without delay.

AYR COUNTY COUNCIL AND ITS MEDICAL OFFICER.

A discussion arose at the meeting of the Ayr County Council on October 5th in connexion with the work of the county medical officer of health. A motion was made to reconsider the terms of the appointment. Dr. Macdonald was appointed in 1891 at a salary of £450, which was increased to £500 two years later, and to £600 in 1902. Since then he has been appointed medical officer to a number of burghs within the county, the emoluments of which amount to another £100 per annum, and now the Education Committee has appointed him superintendent of the medical inspectors of schools at an additional salary of £100. There is no complaint whatever as to Dr. Macdonald's administration of his office, but the mover of the motion wished a decision that there should be some finality about the number of appointments which the medical officer could accept. It was pointed out during the discussion that in each case the County Council and the Local Government Board had given consent to the appointment before it was accepted by the medical officer, but the motion to reconsider the matter was carried by a majority.

PRESENTATION TO DR. TAYLOR, KEITH.

On October 5th Dr. Taylor of Keith was the recipient of handsome gifts from friends and patients. These gifts consisted of a motor car for Dr. Taylor, and a pair of silver candlesticks and gong for Mrs. Taylor.

MEDICAL INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS FOR KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

Dr. D. Johnston, Ipswich, has been appointed school medical officer for the county. Dr. Johnston is at present assistant medical officer of health and medical inspector of school children at Ipswich.

Ireland.

[FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS.]

ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE OF IRELAND.

THERE was a large attendance at the opening of the eleventh session of the Irish Veterinary College, over which Sir Christopher Nixon presided, a few days ago in Dublin. In opening the proceedings the Chairman stated that during the six years that the college had been conducting examinations 96 pupils had been passed, and every one of these had been successful in obtaining appointments. Some of their students had been appointed to important posts in South Africa, and at home eight of their graduates were working under the Department of Agriculture. The establishment of veterinary dispensaries throughout the congested district would open up fresh opportunities for employment, and already six out of sixteen officers appointed had been educated in the college. He hoped that in future the Department of Agriculture would recognize the courses of instruction given by the Veterinary College for the purpose of grants under the regulations for the conduct of technical schools. After Sir Christopher Nixon's remarks, the prizes for the past session were distributed by Professor Mettam, and Professor McWeeney delivered an address on the tendencies of modern research. The proceedings then terminated.

FATAL CYCLING ACCIDENT.

Much sympathy is felt with the relatives of Dr. P. J. Smith, of Stamullen, who was killed as a result of a fall from his bicycle on October 1st. Dr. Smith was cycling home in the dark, after attending to a call, and apparently mistaking the way at the corner of a by-road, ran into a wall, and, falling, was instantly

killed owing to a fracture dislocation of the neck. Dr. Smith had been for many years dispensary medical officer for the district of Stamullen.

LUNACY IN IRELAND.

The fifty-ninth report of the inspectors of lunatics for Ireland for the year 1909 shows that the certified insane on January 1st, 1910, numbered 24,144, and on January 1st, 1909, 23,931, giving an increase for the year of 213, which is identical with the increase for the previous year, but is 150 less than the average increase for the previous ten years. These figures relate to the actual numbers of the insane under care, but do not include the insane wandering at large. The insane at the end of 1909 were distributed as follows: In district and auxiliary asylums, 20,270; in the Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Dundrum, 174; in private asylums, 901; in workhouses, 2,655; and Chancery patients, 144. An increase took place during the year in all classes of institutions except workhouses, in which the numbers decreased by 68. A similar decrease has been steadily taking place for several years past, the percentage number confined in workhouses having declined from 27 per cent. in 1880 to 11 per cent. in 1909.

Proportion of Insane to General Population.

A table is furnished under this heading showing that the number of insane under care has increased from 250 per 100,000 of the population in 1880 to 552 per 100,000 estimated population in 1909. These figures probably include about 85 per cent. of all the insane in Ireland, as at the last census it was estimated that about 15 per cent. of the total insane were unregistered. It is satisfactory to note that for the past four years the rate of increase has been only 5 per annum, whereas the average rate during the twenty years included in the table was over 10 per annum. During the same period the total population has diminished by about 830,000. As already stated, the insane in Ireland are distributed over district and auxiliary asylums, the criminal lunatic asylum, private asylums, and in unlicensed houses as Chancery patients. The statistical information concerning these separate classes does not follow one uniform plan, and it is therefore necessary to deal with these classes separately.

District and Auxiliary Asylums.

On December 31st, 1909, there were in these institutions 20,270 patients, including 10,937 males and 9,333 females. This shows a total increase of 232 persons during the year. The relative proportion of males to females (54 per cent. and 46 per cent. respectively) is about the same as during the last twenty years. Analysis of the returns from individual asylums shows that male lunatics are proportionately more numerous in rural districts and female lunatics in urban districts.

Admissions.—These numbered 3,601 during the year, a decrease of 197 from the previous year. Of these 2,842 were admitted for the first time; while 759 had previously been under care. The recovery-rate per 100 admissions was 38.4. The admissions were classified according to the forms of mental disorder into: Mania of all kinds, 1,733; melancholia of all kinds, 1,323; dementia, primary, secondary, senile, and organic, 201; general paralysis of the insane, 55; epileptic insanity, 118; congenital mental deficiency, 155; insanity doubtful, 16. Heredity was returned as a probable cause in 27 per cent. of the admissions, or 973 cases in all; alcoholic excess in 336 cases, of which 273 were males; while in 754 cases no definite cause could be assigned. Other stated causes were: Venereal disease, 47; pregnancy and the puerperium, 47; puberty and the climacteric, 86; old age, 119; previous attacks, 343; various diseases, 208.

Discharges and Deaths.—The total number of patients discharged during the year was 1,817, of which 1,382 were discharged as recovered. The proportion of recoveries to the daily average number of residents was 6.8 per cent. By far the greater number of recoveries was in patients who had been in confinement for a period less than twelve months. These totalled 1,125; 119 recoveries occurred in cases

in confinement over one year and under two years, while one case was discharged recovered after a residence of over forty years. During the year 1,542 patients died, giving a death rate on the average number resident of 7.6; 2 of the deaths were by suicide, and 4 resulted from misadventure. Of the total deaths, 446 were due to cerebro-spinal diseases, including 79 from general paralysis; 350, or 22.7 per cent. of the total, were due to phthisis; 377 were due to thoracic diseases other than phthisis, 42 to abdominal diseases, and 268 to general diseases, including 114 from senile decay.

Average Cost.—The average cost per patient per annum, less loan repayments, receipts from miscellaneous sources, and receipts on behalf of paying patients, was for district asylums £22 11s. 11d., and for Youghal Auxiliary Asylum £14 1s., showing an increase of 4s. per head for the district asylums, and a reduction of 21s. per head for the auxiliary asylum. A total profit of £14,532 12s. 3d. was made on the working of the asylum farms during the year.

Superannuation Act.—During the year the Asylums Officers' Superannuation Act came into operation. This Act entitles asylum officials in the future to superannuation and other allowances, and at the same time calls upon the officials to make a contribution towards their pensions. The officials are to be divided into two classes—the first consisting of all established officers and servants who have the charge of patients in the usual course of their employment, and the second class to include all other established officers and servants. Those of the first class are entitled to a superannuation allowance after twenty years' service and if not less than 55 years of age, at the rate of one-fiftieth of their salary for each completed year of service. Those of the second class receive a superannuation allowance in similar circumstances, except that the pensionable age limit is raised to 60 years, and the rate is one-sixtieth for each year of service.

State Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Dundrum.

The number of patients resident in Dundrum Asylum at the end of 1909 was 174, an increase of 6 over the previous year. Twenty-one cases were admitted, 13 were discharged, and 2 died. Of the 21 admissions, 8 were found insane on arraignment; 7 were acquitted of the offences with which they were charged, on the ground of insanity, or were found guilty but insane when the offences were committed; 6 became insane while undergoing sentences, and were transferred to the asylum. Seven of the admitted patients were classified as suffering from mania; 2 from melancholia; 6 from dementia; 1 from general paralysis; 1 from idiocy; and 4 doubtful or not insane. The offences with which they were charged included 9 cases of murder or manslaughter, and 2 of attempted suicide. Only one admitted patient was well educated; 3 could read and write well; and 15 could read and write indifferently. Of the 13 patients discharged 10 were transferred to district asylums, and 3 were liberated or given up to care of friends. The average cost of maintenance per patient was £41 5s. 6d.

Persons of Unsound Mind in Irish Workhouses.

On January 1st, 1910, the pauper lunatics in Irish workhouses, exclusive of those boarded out under contract between the committees of district asylums and the Poor Law guardians, numbered 2,655, including 1,014 males and 1,641 females. This number shows a decrease of 68 as compared with the previous year. In addition, 94 cases were boarded out as above indicated. The report calls attention under this heading to the need of special accommodation for pauper idiot and imbecile children, whereby they could be removed from the contaminating influence of association with the adult lunatics in asylums or with the pauper inmates of workhouses.

Private Asylums.

In Ireland accommodation for the insane who are able to contribute towards their maintenance is provided in licensed houses, of which there are twelve; in lunatic hospitals not kept for profit, of which there

are four; and a certain number are received into district asylums. On January 1st, 1910, there were 901 patients in licensed houses and lunatic hospitals—an increase of 38 on the previous year. Admissions numbered 258; 176 were discharged, and 44 died. The admissions were classified according to the forms of mental disorder into: Mania of all kinds, 102; melancholia of all kinds, 107; dementia, 20; general paralysis, 1; epileptic insanity, 3; congenital insanity, 24; not insane, 1. Hereditary influence was assigned as the cause in 133 cases, and alcoholic excess in 79 of the total number of cases under treatment during the year. The percentage of recovery on admissions was 34.5, as compared with 29.7 in the previous year. All the deaths were due to natural causes, but no statistics are furnished as to the actual cause in each case.

BELFAST.

King Edward Memorial.

The sum for this project now amounts to close on £13,000, and its success is practically assured. A new block with special vaccine and electrical departments and some residential rooms in the upper stories is to be added to the Royal Victoria Hospital.

Public Health Action.

At a special meeting of the City Corporation held on October 6th, an omnibus bill was discussed, amended, and passed. Among its many clauses are several important hygienic measures which comprise by-laws preventing undue exposure of articles of food or drink; insuring officers in the infectious diseases hospital; obtaining from registrars of births and deaths returns of deaths registered by them; providing that rundlets, baskets, etc., used for the conveyance of food shall not be carried in carts used for the conveyance of manure; enforcing that no house shall be let to two or more tenants unless and until separate sanitary accommodation is provided to the satisfaction of the sanitary authority; restricting the collection of shellfish on the shores of the Lough; granting similar powers as regards private slaughterhouses as the council have with respect to public slaughterhouses. The most vexed question is that of double tenancies, as political issues have been introduced into it; the revising barristers have animadverted on this problem, and test cases have been taken before the higher courts by the City Council and lost. It is sincerely hoped that legislation may be effected which will tend to bring an end to an old scandal.

Whitehouse New Sewerage Works.

These works were opened on October 4th. They consist of the modern bacterial systems, sedimentation tanks, and automatic sprinklers. Formerly there was no proper sewerage scheme for this large area on the north side of the Lough; now an excellent filtered water of a high degree of purity is finally discharged into the river at its outfall into the sea. The measure should help to lessen the pollution of the Lough, which forms such a serious problem to the health authorities of Belfast. The total cost is £9,850.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

Dr. Baillie has recently issued his report on the health of Belfast for 1909. It is a volume of 222 pages with an index of five pages, and numerous maps, diagrams, charts, and tables of statistics.

Vital Statistics.

The population is estimated at 386,576, the birth-rate 28.2, and the death-rate 18.2. For comparison, Dr. Baillie gives the population, as estimated by the English method of calculation, as 427,458, and consequently the death-rate as 16.4—it is not often that the Irish understate their case; the birth-rate is 1.5 below that of 1908, and 2.9 below that for the ten years 1899 to 1908. The death-rate is likewise 1.3 below that of the previous year, and 2.6 below the average rate for the same decennium.

On examining the causes of death, it is very satisfactory to note that amongst zymotic diseases, in all

but whooping-cough, there is a decrease; the deaths from cancer have risen from 281 in 1908 to 298, and this is the fourth consecutive year in which an increase has been recorded. As in previous reports, a large number of deaths pass without note, the cause unaccounted for; of 3,026 deaths, no information is obtainable—the usual apologetic sentence appears:

This is a matter for much regret, but is still receiving the earnest consideration of the Public Health Committee, and hopes are entertained that arrangements proposed to be made with the registrars will give a large amount of the information required pending legislation on this much desired reform.

A very similar sentence appeared in the Health Report for 1899, and probably in many previous years, and has since appeared in every consecutive report.

Typhoid Fever.

Undoubtedly the most satisfactory pages in the whole report are those dealing with typhoid fever. Only 90 cases were notified, and this is a great reduction from 842 in 1903—a number which pretty steadily fell to 274 in 1908. Commendable activity has been shown in making inquiries as to the cause in each individual case, and in the increased number of those where sufficient home isolation and nursing could not be obtained, who were removed to hospital. Dr. Baillie was able to trace a number to the milk supply, and again insists on the absolute necessity of a supervision of the city's milk supply by the sanitary officers. The number of deaths from typhoid that have occurred in the last four years is 249 (90, 82, 57, 20); the number in the preceding four years was 544, and in the four years preceding that was 1,505; the death-rate for 1909 per 10,000 was 0.5, which is one-third of the minimum death-rate from typhoid ever published in any preceding year, and yet grave fault was found with those who ventured to say, four years ago, that public hygiene was not as it should be, and that the condition of Belfast as regards typhoid was a scandal. The mortality-rate was 22 per cent. of those attacked; this is undoubtedly too high, and points to the non-registration of cases.

Whooping cough and Measles.

Dr. Baillie draws noteworthy attention to the neglect of whooping cough and measles as causes of mortality; 213 deaths occurred from the former and 186 from the latter. Many of these deaths, he says, would be quite preventable if due care were taken. Parents cannot be induced to take precautions, and both diseases are infectious long before they are recognized. He advocates, as methods for combating the disease, the immediate isolation of all cases, the exclusion of all contacts from schools, and cautioning parents against allowing infected children to play with others.

Tuberculosis.

The record of tuberculosis is also satisfactory. The number of deaths was 811—the lowest on record. The decline has been steady from 1904, when it reached 1,120; the death-rate—2.1—is also a record for Belfast, although still high for English towns. The causes of this decline are probably numerous—for example, the distribution of circulars in national schools and factories and workshops; the work of the Women's National Health Association and their nurses; the enlargement of the Forster Green Hospital, and, probably most important of all, the establishment of the Poor-Law Sanatorium at Whiteabbey, with over 200 beds.

Infant Mortality.

The deaths of children under 1 year number 1,510, or 139 per 1,000; this is high, and undoubtedly indicates a deplorable waste of infant life. Out of seventy-six great towns of England and Wales, only ten are higher, and it is hoped that the establishment of babies' clubs, the labours of the health visitors, and various other philanthropic and municipal enterprises will materially lessen this sad loss of life.

Bacteriological Examination of Milk.

Among other matters of great interest dealt with may be mentioned the very satisfactory report of Professor Symmers on the bacteriological examination

of the milk: 158 specimens were examined; in 40 of these the sedimented and centrifugalized milk was used to inoculate guinea-pigs with the view of determining the presence of tubercle. In no case did the animals show this infection. Up to June 1st, 1910, 163 guinea-pigs have been inoculated with the Belfast milk, and in one case only have tubercle bacilli been proved to be present.

Water Examination.

The water examinations also showed a very satisfactory freedom from coliform bacilli.

Sweating in Linen Industries.

Pages 167-170 contain Dr. Baillie's now much questioned report on sweating amongst the local linen industries; some 5,563 visits were paid to the homes of out-workers and suitable sanitary measures enforced. Dr. Baillie insists that such underpaid labour as the inspector found must inevitably cripple and in great part nullify the good effects of any schemes of health reform. He draws attention to the anomaly as regards the trades listed as notifiable to the local authority in the order of the Home Secretary; an out-worker sewing a handkerchief has to be inspected, while another sewing a sheet is exempt. It is said now that much out-work has been stopped, and so the workers are worse off than before; still there can be no doubt that the rate of wage reported in some cases was scandalous. It will be remembered that the generality of the offence was promptly denied, and the report modified to show that branches of the industry were not charged, before it passed the Health Committee.

Expenditure.

As regards expenditure, £70,423 seems a large sum for this department; of this Purdysburn Fever Hospital cost £7,846 10s. 2d. As undoubtedly 1909 has been one of the most successful years as regards public health, one will not cavil as to expense; it will be hoped that the other reforms which have been advocated now for many years, and either are, or are promised to be, taken in hand, will be carried through as successfully as the problems of typhoid and tuberculosis.

Special Correspondence.

FRANCE.

Progress in Infantile Hygiene.

THERE can be no doubt that the number of cases of infantile gastro-enteritis has decreased enormously of late years in France. The most active season for this slayer of infants used to be from the middle of July to the middle of October, and there is no exaggeration in saying that fifteen years ago no child brought up by hand escaped from its clutches. Not all died, but all young children suffered from it at one time or another. Nowadays, cases of this disease are few and far between. They still occur among children who are reared by the mother, but hardly at all amongst children put out to nurse. At least, this is the case in the part of France which I know well, where the inhabitants, both in intelligence and in knowledge of hygiene and the art of rearing children, may be taken as fair examples of the average French citizen in any part of this country. (Probably the ravages of the disease are as great as ever in places where modern ideas have not yet penetrated, as, for example, in some districts of Brittany.) To what is this immense change for the better due? It is undoubtedly owing to the great advances made in the hygienic education of those professionally concerned in the bringing up of children. The distinction made in a previous sentence proves the truth of this. Whilst the nurse is under the close supervision of a doctor, listens to his advice and is obliged to follow it, the mother, on the other hand, calls in the practitioner only in case of actual illness. Any advice he may give her offends her sense

of independence; she avoids following it without any punishment for her omission save the tardy one of experience. Even now too many women are content to remain in their ignorance and apathy, and never recognize the doctor's authority till the event has justified his warnings.

Among nurses the medical profession has at length succeeded in suppressing the chief cause of infantile diarrhoea, the rubber-tubed feeding bottle, formerly in general use. Its dangers were twofold. First, the tube itself was impossible to clean and was very seldom renewed, so that the milk fermented in it and became infected. In summer, above all, this infection was more intense and worked more rapidly. Another, and equally dangerous drawback to the rubber tube was that it fostered in babies the habit of over-feeding. Indeed, it was invented for that purpose, so that the child lying in his cradle could feed himself in the absence of his mother or his nurse, and the latter had no further trouble with him beyond that of filling his bottle from time to time. Her care being thus confined to one small duty, she devoted all the more attention to it, and justified her neglect of the child by giving it an inexhaustible supply of nourishment, and calmed her conscience by saying that it must be quite safe and right, since the child could feed whenever it wished to do so. This system of feeding, however, led inevitably to dyspepsia. The child, at first enormous, collapsed in a twinkling when his exhausted stomach finally rebelled against this systematic stuffing—an event which naturally occurred when the arrival of hot weather caused the loss of appetite and also changed the quality of the milk that was swallowed. The suppression of the rubber tube in the feeding bottle has thus eliminated two great causes of disease in children, and nurses have been forced to devote more attention to the proper feeding of the baby. The public service of the supervision of nurses in a very short space of time obliged them to abandon the use of the rubber tube, for disobedience in this respect could be punished by the withdrawal of the child from their care. On this account, the doctor had to send in more regular and frequent reports to the departmental authority. Ten years ago the book which the nurse had obtained from the mayor was kept by her in her own home. The doctor wrote his report on a special sheet, and these were only seen once a year, and sometimes far less frequently, by the departmental inspector in the course of his tour of inspection. Nowadays the doctor has to send each month to the Préfecture a brief report on a specially printed sheet. The nurses, thus placed under more efficient supervision, are more careful in following the advice of the doctor and obeying his orders, and consequently, with them at least, infantile hygiene has made considerable progress.

The mothers, however, had still to be taken into account. At the instigation of Professor Budin an effort was made to establish dispensaries where poor women could get advice free for their infants. They were invited to bring their babies every month to the office of the mayor of their district, where they could obtain both individual advice and collective instruction from the doctor of the Service of Protection. This enterprise, which was set on foot in a certain number of departments, has had variable results. It has proved extremely useful in towns where the distances are small and where the distribution of sterilized milk has helped to attract the mothers. But it has been far less successful in country places where the population is scattered, where the commune consists of hamlets often separated from each other by considerable distances, and where the road to the mayor's office may be rendered doubly difficult by the bad weather. Finally, it is just the women who stand most in need of advice and supervision who, from natural carelessness, shame, or vanity, do not go to the consultations. Will a time come when it will be necessary to make this compulsory? I do not know if such a measure would be effectual.

The practical truth of the matter is that the chief hope of progress lies in the private work and personal