

THE outbreak at Pembroke Dock appears to be now subsiding, and owing to the precautions taken, the troops remain perfectly healthy. Pembroke Dock is nearly empty of military, and the *Bellerophon* is not allowed to return there till the epidemic has disappeared. The loss to the locality will probably be not far from £1,000 a week, in consequence of the absence of the naval and military forces. This is apart from the large direct expenses and losses otherwise inflicted.

THE Halifax Union comprises the county borough of Halifax, the Halifax Rural Sanitary District, and local board districts. Small-pox has broken out in several of these, chiefly in the villages and towns which adjoin the Dewsbury Union, the latter having, for some months past, as our readers are aware, been visited by a severe epidemic. As usual, nothing was ready, except in the borough, and the very natural resolution of the Halifax Corporation to reserve their own hospital for their own cases caused something like consternation among the smaller authorities. There appear to have been forty or fifty cases at least during the first fortnight of the outbreak, most of them in the area of the Brighouse and Rastrick local boards, and the adjoining villages of the rural sanitary authority. These three bodies have already done much to atone for past inaction by setting to work without a day's further delay to erect a temporary hospital of wood and iron for their joint use. Dr. Bond, medical officer of health for Rastrick, has been appointed to take charge of the arrangements and of the hospital itself when completed, and is pushing forward the work with great rapidity. Other groups of districts in the union are holding conferences with a view to combined action in like manner; others again are contenting themselves with hope that small-pox will not cross their frontiers, a line of policy which, under the circumstances, speaks volumes as to their fitness for local self-government.

DR. T. GARRETT HORDER, Public Vaccinator (Cardiff) writes: Allow me to correct an error which appeared in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of May 14th. The board of guardians have not given any orders whatever about the revaccination of the children attending the elementary schools of this town; they have simply requested the public vaccinators to inspect the children's arms with a view to the discovery of those children who have not been vaccinated in infancy. This work has been performed on several occasions with good results. In some of the schools as many as 10 per cent. of the children have been found to have no vaccination marks whatever.

HEALTH OF ENGLISH TOWNS.

IN thirty-three of the largest English towns, including London, 7,015 births and 3,987 deaths were registered during the week ending Saturday, May 14th. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had declined from 21.8 to 19.7 per 1,000 in the preceding three weeks, rose again to 20.4 during the week under notice. The rates in the several towns ranged from 12.8 in Croydon, 13.0 in West Ham, 13.7 in Portsmouth, and 15.0 in Nottingham to 24.8 in Halifax, 25.0 in Sheffield, 26.4 in Blackburn, 28.8 in Preston, and 28.1 in Wolverhampton. In the thirty-two provincial towns the mean death-rate was 21.0 per 1,000, and exceeded by 1.5 the rate recorded in London, which was 19.5 per 1,000. The 3,987 deaths registered during the week under notice in the thirty-three towns included 538 which were referred to the principal zymotic diseases, against 541 and 527 in the preceding two weeks; of these, 222 resulted from measles, 160 from whooping-cough, 58 from scarlet fever, 38 from diphtheria, 36 from diarrhoea, 20 from "fever" (principally enteric), and 4 from small-pox. These 538 deaths were equal to an annual rate of 2.8 per 1,000; in London the zymotic death-rate was 3.3, while it averaged 2.4 per 1,000 in the thirty-two provincial towns. No death from any of these zymotic diseases was recorded last week in Gateshead, while they caused the lowest rates in Brighton, Norwich, Leeds, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and the highest rates in Manchester, Sunderland, Birkenhead, and Preston. Measles showed the highest proportional fatality in Birkenhead, Manchester, London, Leicester, Liverpool, and Birmingham; scarlet fever in Huddersfield, Cardiff, and Preston; whooping-cough in Hull, Blackburn, Preston, Derby, Salford, Sunderland, and Birkenhead; "fever" in Plymouth; and diarrhoea in Preston. The 38 deaths from diphtheria recorded during the week under notice in the thirty-three towns included 24 in London, 2 in Cardiff, 2 in Birmingham, and 2 in Nottingham. Three fatal cases of small-pox were registered in London, and 1 in Liverpool, but not one in any other of the thirty-three large towns; 73 small-pox patients were under treatment in the Metropolitan Asylums Hospitals, and 13 in the Highgate Small-pox Hospital, on Saturday last, May 14th. The number of scarlet fever patients in the Metropolitan Asylums Hospitals and in the London Fever Hospital on the same date was 1,592, against numbers increasing from 1,296 to 1,484 on the preceding four Saturdays; 232 cases were admitted during the week, against 177 and 200 in the previous two weeks. The death-rate from diseases of the respiratory organs in London was equal to 3.7 per 1,000, and was below the average.

HEALTH OF SCOTCH TOWNS.

DURING the week ending Saturday, May 14th, 994 births and 635 deaths were registered in eight of the principal Scotch towns. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had been 21.3 and 21.4 per 1,000 in the preceding two weeks, further rose to 22.3 during the week under notice, and exceeded by 2.4 per 1,000 the mean rate during the same period in the thirty-three large English towns. Among these Scotch towns the lowest death-rates were 13.4 in Leith and 14.9 in Greenock, and the highest rates 22.3 in Perth and 27.6 in Glasgow. The 635 deaths in these towns included 80 which were referred to the principal zymotic diseases, equal to an annual rate of 2.9 per 1,000, which slightly exceeded the mean zymotic death-rate during the same period in the large English towns. The highest zymotic death-rates were recorded in Greenock and Glasgow. The 355 deaths registered in Glasgow included 31 from measles, 14 from whooping-cough, and 2 from diphtheria. Five fatal cases of "fever" were recorded in Dundee. The death-rate from diseases of the respiratory organs in these towns was equal to 5.1 per 1,000, against 3.7 in London.

HEALTH OF IRISH TOWNS.

IN sixteen of the principal town districts of Ireland the deaths registered during the week ending Saturday, May 7th, were equal to an annual rate of 28.5 per 1,000. The lowest rates were recorded in Armagh and Dundalk, and the highest in Dublin and Sligo. The death-rate from the principal zymotic diseases averaged 5.5 per 1,000. The 221 deaths registered in Dublin were equal to an annual rate of 33.0 per 1,000 (against 35.8 and 43.9 in the preceding two weeks), the rate during the same period being 18.9 in London and 17.3 in Edinburgh. The 221 deaths in Dublin included 47 which were referred to the principal zymotic diseases (equal to an annual rate of 7.0 per 1,000), of which 40 resulted from measles, 4 from whooping-cough, 2 from diarrhoea, and 1 from diphtheria.

FEEES FOR CERTIFICATES OF LUNATICS IN WORKHOUSES.

WE see by a report in the *Western Daily Mercury* that the Poor-law authorities of Devonport have met with an unexpected difficulty, as they have decided to pay a fee of 2s. 6d. only for the medical certificates in reference to the lunatics in the workhouse. At the last meeting of the Board it was stated there were eight such cases, but no medical certificates could be procured for the fees which had been offered. We have repeatedly expressed the opinion that 10s. 6d. should be the minimum fee for these workhouse certificates, and we are not, therefore, surprised that the present difficulty has arisen. Should the necessary certificates not be forthcoming, the retention of these patients in the workhouse will be a direct contravention of the Lunacy Act, and their removal to an asylum will become necessary, and additional and unnecessary expense will consequently be thrown on the ratepayers. It is to be hoped that the guardians of the poor of Devonport will be wise in time, and decide upon paying a fairly remunerative fee for these and all other certificates they may require.

INDIA AND THE COLONIES.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

BRITISH LUNATICS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.—Of the 3,659 officially recognised lunatics in New South Wales no fewer than 2,014 are of British birth—"imported cranks" they are labelled in local phrase—those born in the country numbering only 1,121. The complaint is that as the native-born population is nearly three times as great as that of British origin it is clear that Britain supplies something more than five times its average of lunatics. The figures evidently require revision, but in any case it is a grievance which cannot easily be redressed.

INFLUENZA.—The New South Wales Board of Health lately addressed a communication to every legally qualified practitioner in the colony requesting him to send in a report embodying his experience of the last epidemic of influenza. Medical men practising in the sheep countries are especially invited to report the result of their observations on shearing shed fever, both by itself and in comparison with influenza. The Board of Health having in view the probable recurrence of influenza in New South Wales has also issued a circular to the public containing instructions as to the precautions to be taken.

PROPOSED HOME FOR INEBRIATES.—A movement is on foot for the foundation of a cottage home for male inebriates in the neighbourhood of Sydney. Accommodation will in the first instance be provided for four to six patients. The executive committee consists of Messrs. Crosbie B. Brownrigg, J. S. Shearston, and Courtenay Smith.

LEPROSY.—A report just issued by the Board of Health states that the number of white lepers now under detention in the colony is 8, while a ninth has just died. Five of these sufferers were discovered during the course of the past year; none of them, however, were recent cases, all without exception having had the disease for some years before their existence became known to the authorities through the operation of the law of November, 1890, which warrants the detention of lepers and compels medical practitioners to report all cases they may meet with. Twenty years ago a nearly equal number of lepers was known to exist in the colony, and between 1872 and 1875 no fewer than 6 white lepers came under the notice of Dr. Cox. There is, therefore, nothing to justify a fear that leprosy is now showing any signs of increased activity in the colony.

OBITUARY.

JOSHUA PATERSON, M.D., C.M.GLAS., F.F.P.S.GLAS.

DR. JOSHUA PATERSON died at his residence in Glasgow on May 15th, at the age of 78. A graduate in medicine as long ago as 1836, Dr. Paterson was unknown to the present generation as a medical practitioner, for a stroke of good fortune enabled him, early in his career, to devote himself more to public and benevolent work. Thus as a volunteer surgeon, he took part in the volunteer movement, and for a time he served the city in the Town Council. He was a trustee of the Ferguson Bequest Fund, and to it and the work of the Free Church and numerous charitable associations, the leisure of his later life was chiefly devoted.

THE London School of Medicine for Women and the New Hospital for Women will each benefit to the extent of £3,000 from the bequest of Mrs. Pfeiffer.