

up by Stanley, and organised by Sir F. De Winton. On his return he published *Hints to Travellers in the Tropics*, embodying his experience of the more severe forms of African fevers. Subsequently his time was spent for the most part in travelling with patients in search of health, and it was whilst engaged in a trip of this kind that he met with his untimely death. Besides numerous testimonials of a private character, Dr. Leslie received, in recognition of his services, the Russo-Turkish and Zulu war medals, the Order of the Medjidieh, the Order of Leopold, and the Congo Star.

DEATHS IN THE PROFESSION ABROAD.—Among the members of the medical profession in foreign countries who have recently passed away are Dr. Ritter von Madurowicz, Professor of Midwifery and Gynæcology in the University of Cracow, at the age of 62; Dr. Horace Hollister, of Scranton, Pennsylvania, a great authority on local archæology, and the possessor of one of the finest collection of aboriginal relics in the United States, aged 70; Dr. F. Minot Weld, of Jamaica Plain, Mass., some time Superintendent of New York Hospital, aged 53; Dr. J. G. Gishizki, one of the leading alienists of Kieff, aged 60; and Dr. Archinard, the oldest practitioner of Lyons, aged 90.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND POOR-LAW MEDICAL SERVICES.

HEALTH OF ENGLISH TOWNS.

IN thirty-three of the largest English towns, including London, 6,755 births and 4,654 deaths were registered during the week ending Saturday, January 20th. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had increased from 22.6 to 28.6 per 1,000 in the preceding three weeks, declined again to 23.2 last week. The rates in the several towns ranged from 15.2 in Halifax and 15.7 in Leicester to 38.0 in Plymouth and 42.4 in Norwich. The high rates in the two last-mentioned towns were due to the fatal prevalence of influenza. In the thirty-two provincial towns the mean death-rate was 22.9 per 1,000, and was 0.7 below the rate recorded in London, which was 23.7 per 1,000. The zymotic death-rate in the thirty-three towns averaged 2.5 per 1,000; in London the rate was equal to 2.9, while it averaged 2.2 per 1,000 in the thirty-two provincial towns, and was highest in Salford, Plymouth, and Birkenhead. Measles caused a death-rate of 1.5 in Salford and 2.5 in Birkenhead; scarlet fever of 1.1 in Burnley and in Huddersfield; whooping-cough of 2.0 in Salford, 2.2 in Bolton, and 5.3 in Plymouth; and "fever" of 1.5 in Sunderland. The 74 deaths from diphtheria included 48 in London, 4 in Salford, and 3 each in Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, and Sheffield. Six fatal cases of small-pox were registered in Birmingham, 4 in Bradford, 3 in Bristol, and 1 each in West Ham, Leeds, and Hull, but not one in London or in any other of the thirty-three towns. There were 82 small-pox patients under treatment in the Metropolitan Asylums Hospitals and in the Highgate Small-pox Hospital on Saturday last, January 20th, against 93, 94, and 82 at the end of the preceding three weeks; 14 new cases were admitted during the week, against 15 and 12 in the preceding two weeks. The number of scarlet fever patients in the Metropolitan Asylums Hospitals and in the London Fever Hospital on Saturday last was 2,645, against 2,988, 2,855, and 2,736 at the end of the preceding three weeks; 246 new cases were admitted during the week, against 210 and 224 in the preceding two weeks.

HEALTH OF SCOTCH TOWNS.

DURING the week ending Saturday, January 20th, 893 births and 616 deaths were registered in eight of the principal Scotch towns. The annual rate of mortality in these towns, which had been 21.5 and 23.8 per 1,000 in the preceding two weeks, declined again to 21.6 last week, and was 1.6 per 1,000 below the mean rate during the same period in the large English towns. Among these Scotch towns the death-rates ranged from 12.5 in Greenock to 34.7 in Paisley. The zymotic death-rate in these towns averaged 2.1 per 1,000, the highest rates being recorded in Paisley and Leith. The 291 deaths registered in Glasgow included 13 from whooping-cough, 6 from diphtheria, and 5 from scarlet fever. Two fatal cases of small-pox were recorded in Leith.

SMALL-POX IN EDINBURGH.

DURING last week three cases of small-pox were reported, and the patients were at once removed to the Canongate Hospital. A fourth case remains under observation as doubtful, and the family of one of the three patients has been placed under rigid quarantine. Of these three cases, one was a man who had been employed in Leith, and the other two occurred in that part of the city of Edinburgh which lies nearest to Leith. One of the three patients has since died.

SMALL-POX AT LEITH.

DURING last week 17 new cases of small-pox were reported to the "public health authorities" (*sic*). Of these, 15 were admitted to the hospital; 2 patients died in the hospital and 10 were discharged. The number of cases since the outbreak of the disease is now 116.

LIABILITY FOR INSANITARY PREMISES.

A NOVEL cause of action has been discovered and held by Baron Pollock to be well founded, in an action of Caven v. Arno, recently tried by him at the Guildhall. The plaintiff claimed damages from his landlord—not as his landlord but as the owner of neighbouring premises—for allowing a drain on them to remain in a dangerous condition, in consequence of which the health of the plaintiff's family was injured. Such acts of carelessness occur only too frequently, and it is strange that the liability for damages of persons responsible for them has not been declared by a court of law before now. The maxim "*sic utere tuo ut alienum non lædas*" is old enough, and an owner of property who causes or allows a nuisance to be on his own land has frequently been held responsible for the consequences of so doing. Mere neglect to clean out a drain seems, however, never to have been treated as a cause of action. It undoubtedly may cause a very offensive and very dangerous nuisance, and where it does so, and injury ensues, it certainly seems right that the person injured should be able to obtain compensation. In such cases it is generally very difficult to prove that the injury sustained is the direct result of the carelessness or misconduct of the defendant or his agents. Unless the plaintiff can establish that such injury was caused by some negligent or wrongful act or omission of the defendant, his case fails, and he has to pay a probably large bill of costs, in addition to the injuries he has already sustained. People are, therefore, no doubt averse to bringing actions in such cases, however strongly they may feel that they have a good moral claim to compensation. In the recent case before Baron Pollock the jury only gave the plaintiff £25 damages, though he alleged that two of his children had died, his wife's health was seriously impaired, and a business which she managed was consequently destroyed. It was probably impossible to show that these were all matters for which the defendant was responsible. Still, the man who has sustained such losses probably thinks £25 a very poor solatium. He has not lost his case, and has no costs to pay, and he has successfully vindicated an old legal principle in a new form; but his success does not seem likely to encourage many others to follow his example. Owners of insanitary premises are shown to have a further liability beyond what has hitherto been generally recognised; but the risks and difficulties attendant on the attempt to enforce that liability by means of an action for damages are such as to make it unlikely to be often used.

AN INSANITARY AREA IN SOUTHWARK.

THE question of the desirability of dealing with certain courts and alleys which lie on the west side of the Borough High Street is again to the fore. The late Dr. Waterworth called attention to the need of improvement in this neighbourhood, and an inquiry was held in reference to what is known as the Falcon Court area by an inspector of the Home Office, but Dr. Waterworth did not succeed in carrying his ideas into execution. During the past few months Falcon Court has been the subject of much attention in Southwark, and though closing orders have been obtained for several houses in this locality, it has been realised that nothing short of demolition and rearrangement of portions of the area can effectually remedy the existing evils. Delegates from the vestry of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, were recently invited by a committee of the London County Council to attend a conference for the purpose of considering the advisability of dealing with Falcon Court, and adjoining courts and alleys, by a scheme under the Housing of the Working Classes Act. Dr. Waldo, the medical officer of health of St. George the Martyr, has now presented a report to his authority, in which he draws attention to views expressed at this conference, and suggests a comprehensive and radical treatment of the area, or, failing this, an alternative method of dealing with it in two sections. He points out the need of open space in the district, and expresses the opinion that abundant accommodation for persons of the artisan class, who would be displaced from the insanitary courts and alleys, could be provided on various building plots which are lying idle in the neighbourhood.

AN INFIRMARY "WITHOUT COMPLAINT."

THE Wolverhampton Guardians have at last taken a small step towards improving the condition of their workhouse. There are considerably over 200 sick beds in the house, and to attend to their unfortunate occupants there is one nurse. The guardians have just decided, however, that they will make the munificent provision of four probationers in addition, at salaries not exceeding £10 each. This is, indeed, an advance, and we hope it may be the thin end of a very large wedge, but, as it stands, the granting of one probationer to each fifty or sixty beds, and one nurse thrown in for the lot, is surely a very small modicum of righteousness to make a fuss about, and the fact that this little measure of justice was not carried without a protest, nearly a quarter of the guardians voting against it, prepares one to accept without surprise the statements made by Mrs. Hatton and Dr. Totherick as to the lamentable condition of affairs which has hitherto prevailed. The odd thing, or what would seem odd if we did not know somewhat of Poor-law ways, is that men are to be found who will state that they have been guardians for years, and that during their time of office there have been no complaints. What must be the mental or moral condition of a man who, as he goes week after week through these wards, does not perceive that there must be a scandalous system of terrorism rampant in them to make it possible for 200 sick people, with only one nurse among them, to be without complaint. There are people to whom sick people, even on their dying bed, will not complain, and we cannot but fear that in many cases of such are the guardians of the poor. It is essential that independent visiting committees should be appointed to all workhouses, and that the free light of publicity should especially enter those wards where the sick and the helpless have to live out their lives, every day and all day at the mercy of pauper helps.

THE adjourned meeting of the Epidemiological Society of London for the further discussion of Dr. McVail's paper on the aerial convection of small-pox from hospitals will be held on January 31st at 8 p.m.