

efforts met with considerable success, and close on £100,000 had been obtained when Mr. Carnegie gave his magnificent contribution to the Scottish universities, and for the time being checked all other private munificence. The handsome buildings of the natural philosophy department are already in use, and it is expected that in the coming spring the new medical science buildings will be opened by the Prince of Wales. It is unfortunate that the late Principal never succeeded in getting upon good terms with the students. Even to the end it was always uncertain how the students would behave on any given occasion. With his professorial colleagues Principal Story was, however, on the best of terms. A scrupulously fair man, of high ideals, he kept himself entirely aloof from all petty jealousies and wire-pulling, and in the councils of the university his opinions ever carried great weight.

GIRGENTI HOME FOR INEBRIATES.

In a recent minute of the Glasgow Corporation Committee on the Inebriates Act, the recommendation was made to discontinue the Girgenti Home as a reformatory for inebriates. We understand that no final decision has yet been come to by the corporation as an important communication is expected from the Scottish Office. The Girgenti experiment commenced in 1900, when a committee of the corporation, under the terms of the Inebriates Act, 1898, acquired by purchase the estate and house of Girgenti in Ayrshire for the sum of £7,000. The mansion house consisted of three stories, and the outside offices included a farmstead. At the cost of a further sum of £2,000, the place was made suitable for accommodating and treating the class of persons to be committed to the home—that is, habitual drunkards who had been convicted three times within the preceding twelve months. From the very commencement the scheme was ill-conceived. It was proposed originally to house both male and female inebriates, but in a few months the original certificate was cancelled, and the home was licensed for fifty-eight female inmates. The early experiences were by no means satisfactory. The admissions consisted largely of women who in addition to being intemperate were vicious in their habits, and known to be of the criminal classes. The original rule of not admitting prostitutes was soon abandoned. The means employed for overcoming the craving for drink consisted chiefly in providing good food, with healthy outdoor work. Under these conditions the general health of inmates rapidly improved, but it is questionable whether the moral effect of the training was of any value. We understand that a very large number of those treated relapsed again within a short time of their liberation. Escapes from the home were numerous; in one year 35 escapes occurred, involving 20 patients. In other cases it was found impossible to deal with the inmates, and they had to be transferred to the State Inebriate Reformatory at Perth. The expenses of the home were heavy, and though we are sorry that the results as regards cures were so unsatisfactory, it is to be hoped that a costly experiment will now be stopped.

Ireland.

THE DEBT OF MEDICINE TO IRELAND.

At a meeting last month of the Royal Academy of Medicine, Dr. G. A. Gibson of Edinburgh paid an interesting tribute to Ireland in respect of the debt owing to it by general medicine for knowledge of the circulation and its affections. Among the workers to whom he specially alluded were Graves, whose clinical lectures were incomparable for felicity of diction, breadth of view, and originality, and Stokes. The latter did much more for the study of aneurysm than any of his predecessors, and in his book on the heart coined the term "embryocardia" fifty years before it passed into currency; moreover, long before Oertel, he proclaimed the advantage of exercise in the treatment of heart disease. Sir Dominic Corrigan's papers on heart disease and heart murmurs were so comprehensive that little had since been added to the information contained in them; and another Irish observer, Adams, anticipated a good deal of the work since done by others in regard to the

effect of mitral obstruction on the chambers of the heart. As far back as 1772 McBride, in his *Practice of Physic*, showed the association between a slow pulse and a fatty heart. Bellingham had undoubtedly conceived the modern treatment of aneurysm by dietetic and physical means; while in 1835 it was stated by the Dublin Committee of the British Association that the auricles could produce sound. This observation had escaped notice until, nearly half a century later, a distinguished graduate of Trinity College and the speaker had together studied a case of cleft sternum, and had been able to hear the movement of the auricles. Finally, in recent years it had occurred simultaneously to Professor Finny, President of the Royal Academy of Medicine, and to Professor Ritchie to turn *x* rays to use in the study of heart disease.

THE TRINITY COLLEGE COMMISSION.

We understand that the Commission which has been inquiring into the management of Trinity College in relation to university education in Ireland has practically arrived at the end of its labours. The report of the majority has been agreed upon and will shortly be formally presented. There are rumours that considerable changes will be recommended. The solution which it is hoped will satisfy the Roman Catholic hierarchy will be in the shape of a new college in the University of Dublin. The present mode of appointment to fellowships would be modified, and the relations of the medical school to Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital and to the Royal College of Physicians revised.

INSANITARY DWELLINGS IN BELFAST.

An emergency meeting of the Public Health Committee was summoned by its Chairman on January 12th, to consider a paragraph that had appeared in one of the morning newspapers. The article in question stated:

We do not exaggerate when we say that within twenty minutes' walk of the centre of the city there are to be found inhabited houses which are a disgrace to Belfast. They are a standing menace to the health of the city. These dilapidated areas produce disease, vice, and crime, and they ought therefore to be wiped out. Not only have they a demoralizing and unhealthy effect upon those who live in them, but the evil influence they create is felt all over the city. The Public Health Committee cannot be acquitted of negligence in this matter, and it must now be brought home to the members that the public expect that insanitary houses will be closed without any unnecessary delay.

Every sanitary officer in the city, male or female, had been summoned to attend the meeting, so that the matter might be threshed out. They were called before the Committee in rotation, were subjected to a most searching examination and cross-examination, and were asked to express their opinions freely and fully; it is understood they all denied the allegations. It is also stated in the public press that all the members of the Committee promised not to reveal what passed at the meeting.

The report of this meeting has given rise to no little wonder among those who take an interest in matters of public health. The unusual course of specially summoning a meeting, the secrecy maintained, the apparent insinuation of complicity of some of the sanitary officers, all form a mystery which may turn out to be a mare's nest, but have given rise to an uneasy feeling. The sanitary officers have, in the past, escaped all fault-finding on the part of the public; indeed, they have nearly uniformly gained praise; and, unless some serious matter has come to light, more caution should have been used in framing a report for the public press.

EPIDEMIC CEREBRO-SPINAL FEVER IN BELFAST.

Some cases of undoubted epidemic cerebro-spinal fever have occurred in Belfast. They have been removed to the new fever hospital at Purdysburn, and the diagnosis verified by lumbar puncture and cultivation of the microbe. The mortality has been high.

South Africa.

THE ROBBER ISLAND LEFERS.

In view of certain more or less sensational statements as to the wretched condition of the patients segregated in the leper establishment at Robben Island which have at

various times appeared in the newspapers of this country, we are glad to learn that now, at any rate, there is little with which the most emotional philanthropist or the most fervid advocate of a theory could reasonably find fault. In *South Africa* of January 5th it is stated that when the Conference of principal medical officers of health for the various South African colonies was held in Capetown recently, the opportunity was taken of paying a visit to Robben Island. The visitors were so favourably impressed by what they saw that they embodied their satisfaction in the following resolution, which was passed unanimously:

That, after visiting the Leper Asylum on Robben Island, the members of this Conference wish to put on record their appreciation of the good work performed in that institution. Generally speaking, the asylum is a model of discipline, cleanliness, and comfort. The patients are well looked after, medically and otherwise. Considering that this institution is the oldest of the kind in South Africa, it is surprising that so few ancient defects remain, and its condition and management reflect the highest credit on the Cape Government and all those concerned.

Canada.

CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL SERVICES.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GUY CARLETON JONES, Permanent Army Medical Corps, has been appointed Director-General Army Medical Services, Canada, vice Colonel Fiset, D.S.O., who has been appointed Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence. The new Director-General was educated at King's College Hospital, London. He served in South Africa with the 10th Canadian Field Hospital, and received the medal and three clasps, the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel. He is Honorary Surgeon to the Governor-General of Canada.

THE COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF QUEBEC.

At the semi-annual meeting of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Province of Quebec the question of life insurance fees was discussed. For a number of years the sum of 5 dollars was invariably paid for an examination of this nature, but of late there has been a reduction to 3 dollars, and a number of medical societies throughout the province have decided to combine to force a return to the old rates. The Governors passed a motion to the effect that the College of Physicians and Surgeons gave all its moral support to the general demand for an increase in the tariff for mutual societies to 2 dollars and insurance companies to five dollars for each examination.

A motion proposing the reduction of the Board of Governors to 28 was lost by 20 votes.

The question of reciprocity, both interprovincial and with Great Britain, was next taken up. Dr. Laurendeau believed that Quebec had nothing to gain by a free interchange of medical men with Great Britain, as it was well known that the current of migration was from England to Canada, and not vice versa. This point, however, he did not wish to emphasize, as it mattered little to French Canadians. There was a much more important point of view in his eyes—namely, the much-desired reciprocity with Ontario. This would certainly be a way to obtain reciprocity, but he feared that Ontario would not enter into the movement until Quebec agreed to her terms. He thought, therefore, that Quebec should let Ontario precede her before adventuring into "such a hornets' nest." Thus, then, on account of reasons and arguments of equal seriousness, the project was held over for six months. Some wonder whether reciprocity of any sort will ever be brought about by such progressive methods, as it was by similar arguments that Dr. Roddick's Dominion Registration Bill was blocked.

The formation of a Central Board of Examiners was next discussed, and the proposal was rejected after a spirited debate.

The proposal to amend the present law for admission to practice was passed with but little debate. For years the facility with which registered physicians could be made by law has been a disgrace to the province. In 1900 there were 48 regular candidates who passed all the examinations, and 39 irregulars who slipped through by flaws in the provincial regulations. In 1901 there were 69 regulars

and 28 irregulars, the year 1902 gave 49 regulars and 26 irregulars, and something of the same kind happened each year to 1906, when there were 29 regulars and 25 irregulars. In all 29 per cent. of the candidates who have appeared since the present law has been in force are irregulars, and have not passed the tests required by the College of Physicians and Surgeons. This does not include persons who have passed by means of a private Bill. This state of things is positively alarming, and it is hoped that the unanimity of the Board will speedily bring about a more rational state of affairs.

The most important of the remaining motions was that which extended the course of study from four to five years before the granting of a licence to practise. This move has been anticipated by McGill University, which proposes next year to inaugurate a five-year course. McGill was the first in Canada to institute a nine-month session extending over four years, and still leads in that respect, and now, with an additional year, it will again be an example to the other Canadian colleges.

HEALTH OF MONTREAL.

The annual report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1905 has appeared after an unusual delay. It is explained that in the statistics illegitimate and premature births have been excluded from calculations, "in order to make more logical comparison with other cities," because the greater portion of the illegitimate children do not belong to the city. It is not mentioned particularly why other cities do not labour under the same disadvantage. The mortality calculated on this basis is 20.6 per 1,000, which is 0.2 less than 1904, and a lower rate than that at Breslau, Prague, Milan, New Orleans, St. Petersburg, and Moscow, and identical with Rome. Including the illegitimate and premature births the death-rate would be 22.96 per 1,000. The death-rate of children under 6 months of age was 30.42 per cent., and for those under 5 years it reached the appalling figure of 56.31 per cent. The birth-rate was 37.92 per 1,000. The births were divided as follows: French Canadians, 44.19; other Catholics, 25.45; Protestants, 21.77. The death statistics were shown thus: French Canadians, 27.05 per 1,000; other Catholics, 20.42 per 1,000; Protestants, 14.30 per 1,000. The highest death-rate was in St. Denis Ward, where the figures reached 38.40 per 1,000. Marriages were recorded as 10.31 per 1,000, or 0.5 per 1,000 more than 1904. They were divided as follows: French Canadians, 9.99 per 1,000; other Catholics, 8.30 per 1,000; Protestants, 14.30 per 1,000.

Hong Kong.

ANTIMALARIAL WORK.

IN an address this year to the Hong Kong and China Branch of the British Medical Association, of which he is President, Dr. Francis Clark, Medical Officer of Health for the colony, gave a detailed account of what has been done in the way of combating malaria and the results which have been obtained. Steps upon modern lines seem to have been taken in the matter as far back as 1899, but at first were not of a very active character, for the *Anopheles* at that time had not been identified in the colony. In the following year it was shown that the true malaria-bearing mosquito could be found throughout the island, as well as in Kowloon and the New Territory; and since then, year by year, work has been done in the way of draining nullahs, filling in of pools, subsoil drainage of marshy ground. The result has been that the mortality from malarial fever in the colony has dropped greatly, the diminution not being merely relative, but actual, or, in other words, the number of deaths recorded of late years has been far smaller than it used to be, although the population has grown. All species of malarial parasites are found—simple tertian, quartan, and malignant, the latter being the commonest among those who seek admission to the Government Hospital. In such admissions, however, the fall during the past two years has been so great that Dr. Clark estimates that in hospital expenditure alone it represents a saving to Government of a sum equal to 8 per cent. on the whole cost of the work done in the way of endeavouring to keep down the number of *Anopheles* by engineering methods. The police force, too