

## Obituary.

EBENEZER DAVIES, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.,

FORMERLY M.O.H. SWANSEA.

We have to record with much regret the death at the age of 81 of Dr. Ebenezer Davies, who was for forty-three years Medical Officer of Health to the Swansea Urban and Port Districts.

Dr. Davies was born at Haverfordwest, received his medical education at Guy's Hospital and took the diplomas of M.R.C.S. Eng. and L.S.A. in 1852. Shortly afterwards he settled in Swansea. The town was then going through a period of sanitary transition. Dr. G. G. Bird, who was mayor of the borough in 1842, had sought to arouse the attention of the citizens to the insanitary conditions of parts of the borough; he was warmly supported by Councillor W. H. Michael, also a past mayor, who eventually resigned his seat on the council to undertake the duties of medical officer of health. This was in 1853, and the outbreak of cholera in that year helped the sanitary movement. The making of a health-rate, however, aroused considerable opposition, and before the end of the year it was resolved not to renew the appointment but to place upon the superintendent of police the additional duties of inspector of nuisances at a salary of £10 a year.

The subsequent history we may quote from an interesting and sympathetic obituary notice in the *Western Mail*: "The outbreak of yellow fever in 1865 and the passing of the Sanitary Act of 1866, making sanitary measures compulsory by authorities, led to the appointment of Dr. Ebenezer Davies, who brought to the duties a zeal and prudence which are above praise, and which unquestionably had considerable effect on the health of the borough. During his forty-three years of office he had to deal with complicated causes of outbreaks of small-pox, typhoid, and other epidemics, and in each case his measures were well timed and effective, and the evil was often traced to its source. He was a most skilful medical officer of health, being a master of statistics and also of preventive measures, and his control of the port sanitary department was salutary. During his term of office the health of the borough improved very considerably. During his tenure of the post of medical officer the population of the borough increased from 45,000 to 102,000, and the death rate fell from 28 per 1,000 to 18 per 1,000."

In 1908 Dr. Davies, feeling the duties of his office too onerous to a man of his advanced years, resigned, and the appreciation of the Corporation of Swansea and its staff was shown by their presentation to Dr. Davies of a handsome piece of plate. Dr. Davies was a member of the British Medical Association, and had been President of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Branch, and the members took the opportunity of making him a presentation as evidence of their appreciation of his long and honourable service to the cause of public health.

In addition to the office with which his name was especially associated, Dr. Davies was Medical Officer to the Swansea Post Office and Swansea Training College, and Admiralty Surgeon and Agent. He also held the office of President of the West of England and South Wales Branch of the Society of Medical Officers of Health. Outside his official duties Dr. Davies took a deep interest in social work, in which he was ably seconded by his wife. He was Secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society for many years, and had been President of the Sunday School Union.

Dr. H. A. LATIMER, of Swansea, writes: By the death of Mr. Eben. Davies, Swansea loses its oldest and one of its most respected medical practitioners, and, it is not exceeding the truth to say, a man who was beloved by his professional brethren who had been brought into contact with him. It was impossible to meet and to have intercourse with Mr. Davies without quickly appreciating his honesty of purpose, his urbanity, his straightforwardness, and his outspoken defence of what he considered to be right in life. Of an earnestly religious mind, he unostentatiously practised a life of philanthropic and kindly work. He had lived to experience the due appreciation of these merits, both by his fellow townsmen and by his medical colleagues,

and, dying at a ripe old age, he leaves behind him a record of a well-spent life. He and Mrs. Davies, who survives him, had been spared to see their children, sons and daughters, taking good places in life; and it was with an especial pride that he noticed the due recognition of the splendid work of his son, Dr. William Davies, of Johannesburg, who was decorated with the D.S.O. for his services during the war in South Africa, and subsequently was appointed Colonel of the Imperial Light Horse, and later, President of the Transvaal Medical Council. In writing this I give a clue to a very lovable trait in Mr. Davies's character, for nothing gave him greater pleasure than to see the merits of others duly appreciated. I well remember the dinner at which he was entertained by his medical friends on his relinquishing practice, where, among the other speeches, Sir John Williams, Bart., K.C.V.O., who had been one of his pupils, bore affectionate testimony to the worth of his old master. In his medical work he was painstaking and thorough—a fact which was recognized by the large private practice he enjoyed for many years. In his tenure of office as Medical Officer of Health in Swansea he had to do pioneer work, and to cope with some serious epidemics. Mr. Davies was ever ready to give all facilities to his medical brethren who sent cases into the Borough Infectious Hospital, and, on hearing of his death to-day, one of the junior practitioners here told me how much he had valued the kind way in which he had been treated by him in this respect, together with the instruction which he had given him out of his ripe experience in the diagnosis and treatment of acute infectious diseases. He was attended in his last illness, which was of a painless nature, by his friend, Dr. R. C. Elsworth of Swansea.

SYDNEY PARTRIDGE, M.D. EDIN.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, DARLASTON.

THE death took place, on December 20th, of Dr. Sydney Partridge, of Darlaston. The event, which is recorded with much regret, was almost unexpected, for he was only in the 50th year of his age, usually enjoyed admirable health, and had been ill only two days. The cause was septic meningitis, originating in an aural trouble which was of quite recent development, and had given rise to no anxiety.

A Darlaston man by birth, a son and one time partner of an equally well-known Darlaston doctor, Sydney Partridge on leaving school began life as an engineer, and was thus somewhat older when he first qualified in medicine than are most medical men at this stage of their career. His medical education he received at Edinburgh University, where he took the conjoint diplomas and the degrees M.B., C.M. of Edinburgh in the same year, and then worked for a time as Demonstrator of Anatomy. Finally, after rounding off his studies by work at the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, and elsewhere, he took the M.D. Edin. in 1889, receiving commendation for his thesis. He then joined his father in practice at Darlaston, and eventually succeeded to the whole of the practice on the retirement of the latter. Altogether he had been in practice in Darlaston for over twenty years. He was M.O.H. for the town, Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator to the Darlaston district of the Walsall Union, Surgeon to the Police, Certifying Factory Surgeon, and Examiner and Lecturer to the local division of the St. John Ambulance Association. His practice both in Darlaston and in the surrounding villages was large, and there was no more familiar or popular face than his. He was one of the best types of medical practitioner, with a good knowledge of his profession, a cheeriness both of heart and manner, a fine sense of *esprit de corps* which made him popular with his colleagues. He threw himself fully into his work, whatever it might be, and was generally recognized not only as an encouraging, but a truly sympathetic friend, in times of sickness and trouble. His good qualities were obvious to all, but more especially to children, who took to him instinctively. He was a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Public Health and of the Society of Medical Officers of Health, and a member of the South Staffordshire Division of the British Medical Association, and had contributed several papers to the columns of this JOURNAL.

His funeral took place on the third day after his death, and was attended by a large concourse, including many medical men and representatives of the Darlaston District