

During the year £182 had been received for the new out-patient pavilion at the Victoria Hospital, Damascus. Of the £500 or £600 required to build this pavilion £414 had now been subscribed. Dr. E. Sargood Fry, the secretary and superintendent, submitted the annual report, which referred especially to the building of the new premises, which was now far advanced. The total sum required for this would probably be not less than £5000. Three former students had received appointments abroad during the past year. On the motion of Sir James Russell, seconded by Sir Archibald Campbell, office-bearers were elected, Dr. Ritchie being reappointed president of the society.

*The New Principal of the University of Edinburgh.*

The appointment of Sir William Turner, K.C.B., to the Principalship of the University of Edinburgh is a suitable occasion on which to recall the leading incidents in his public career. Sir William Turner was born in Lancaster in 1832. His father was English, but his mother was a Miss Logan, a Berwickshire lady. He received his medical education at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he studied under Sir James Paget. He obtained the Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and graduated as M.B. of the London University. In 1854 he came to Edinburgh as senior demonstrator of anatomy under Professor John Goodsir. This post he held until 1867 when, on the death of Professor Goodsir, he was appointed to the chair of Anatomy. During the 36 years of his occupancy of the chair Sir William Turner has held an unrivalled position as a teacher in the Edinburgh School of Medicine. He has also, as is universally acknowledged, added to the lustre of the chair which had been held by Munro and Goodsir. He has done this in virtue of his contributions to comparative anatomy. He has, moreover, during the whole period of his occupancy of the chair taken an active and energetic interest in all university matters, and has shown himself to be possessed of great organising and administrative ability. In 1873 he was elected to represent the University of Edinburgh on the General Medical Council and on the death of Sir Richard Quain he was elected President of that body, an office which he still holds. He took an active part in the scheme for the erection of the new buildings for the accommodation of the medical faculty of the University and also took a large share of the arrangements in connexion with the erection of the M'Ewan Hall. He is the author of several works on anatomy and he edited the second and third editions of Sir James Paget's classical lectures on surgical pathology. He was joint founder of the *Journal of Anatomy and Physiology*, of which he is still an editor. He was knighted in 1886 and in 1901 he was made a K.C.B. He has honorary degrees from the Universities of Glasgow, St. Andrews, Montreal, Oxford, Durham, Toronto, Dublin, and Cambridge. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England.

*The New Principal and the Students.*

When Sir William Turner met the class of anatomy on Jan. 21st his appointment to the principalship had become widely known. His appearance in the lecture-room became, therefore, the signal for a great demonstration of approval and enthusiasm on the part of his students. When quietness had been restored Sir William Turner addressed the students. He thanked them for the overpowering reception which they had accorded to him and dwelt upon the responsibility of the position to which he had been chosen. He referred to the line of distinguished men who had preceded him in the principalship. Speaking of Sir William Muir he said: "I feel, gentlemen, that I cannot assume the duties of the new office which has been conferred upon me without referring to that courteous gentleman, that kind-hearted man, who has always throughout his 18 years of service here acted towards his colleagues in a noble and impartial way and who as regards the students of the University has shared their feelings and sentiments in a way which has most thoroughly endeared him to them." Sir William Turner then intimated that his having accepted the office of principal implied his relinquishing his position as professor of anatomy. He finished his speech with a warm expression of gratitude to the generations of students who had attended his lectures for the sympathy, kindness, and affection which had subsisted between him and them. Sir William Turner then proceeded with his lecture.

Jan. 26th.

IRELAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

*Sir Charles A. Cameron.*

It was publicly announced in the *Irish Times* of Jan. 24th that the gold medal for distinguished services rendered to public health and sanitary science founded by Sir Henry Harben of London had just been awarded to Sir Charles A. Cameron, the chief public health officer of Dublin.

*Poisoning by Carbon Monoxide.*

In THE LANCET of Jan. 24th, p. 258, I find written, "Carbon monoxide is rapidly becoming a modern terror." The truth of this statement is further exemplified this week by the fact that two cases of fatal coal-gas poisoning took place in Dublin on Jan. 15th when a lady and gentleman staying at the Clarence Hotel were asphyxiated. When discovered the lady was already dead and her husband was in a dying state. The double inquest concluded on Jan. 23rd after having been previously adjourned in order that Professor E. J. McWeeney might furnish his report. He stated that he had made an analysis of the blood of the deceased lady and that it gave the spectroscopic and other indications of being saturated with carbon monoxide—a component part of water gas and to a much less extent of coal gas. He said that the practice of adding a certain amount of the former to the illuminating gas of towns had recently become frequent with gas companies; that since then cases of death from gas poisoning had become much more numerous; and that he considered it to be a grave source of injury to the public health. In point of fact, so many fatalities have occurred in Dublin and Belfast since the composition of illuminating gas in those cities suffered alteration that the matter was noted in THE LANCET many months ago. Within a comparatively short space of time six deaths have taken place from this cause in Dublin alone. In this particular case it was shown at the inquest that the bedroom occupied by the deceased was insufficiently ventilated and that its occupants came from a remote country town in Ireland, where gas has not been introduced. Professor Antony Roche in a letter to the public papers points out that while ordinary gas contains about 6 per cent. of carbon monoxide, water gas contains no less than 40 per cent. of the noxious constituent in question.

*Ulster Branch of the British Medical Association.*

The winter meeting of the Ulster Branch of the British Medical Association was held in the Medical Institute, Belfast, on Jan. 22nd, Professor T. Sinclair, the President, being in the chair. After the reading of the minutes the report of the council (showing members who had been elected) was passed. Dr. S. English read notes of a case of Missed Abortion, with specimens. Mr. T. S. Kirk introduced a discussion on Prostatectomy, in which Mr. A. B. Mitchell, Dr. A. Fullerton, Dr. J. S. Darling, Dr. R. J. Johnstone, Dr. P. Redfern, and the President took part. Patients and specimens from cases of prostatectomy were shown by Mr. Kirk, Mr. Mitchell, and the President. The tendency of the discussion was to regard the operation done by the suprapubic method as one with a future before it, but that it was not the prostate but some form of fibro-adenoma in it which was removed. Dr. Redfern mentioned the interesting historical fact that the late Mr. Lizars had 50 years ago done, as he thought, a prostatectomy, but subsequent examination showed he had not removed that organ. Dr. Redfern regarded it as impossible, anatomically, to remove the prostate. Professor J. W. Byers showed Bossi's Instrument for Rapid Dilatation of the Cervix in certain cases, especially eclampsia, in obstetric practice. He also exhibited a specimen of Cystic Degeneration of the Chorion, illustrated by microscopic sections prepared and shown by Dr. Johnstone. Professor Byers said that in some of the older text-books two types of hydatid mole were described: (1) the simple and (2) the malignant. It was, he thought, interesting in this connexion to note that the very malignant disease of the body of the uterus first described in 1889 by Professor Saenger of Leipsic as deciduoma malignum was preceded in one-half the cases by a history of hydatid mole. Dr. J. R. Davison showed a specimen of Hydatid Mole from a patient, aged 22 years, who had not been pregnant before and in whom there were none of the ordinary symptoms of the condition. Dr. W. A. McKeown read a paper on Intra-ocular Irrigation in the Extraction

of Cataract. Dr. E. C. Thompson, M.P., read notes of (1) a case in which he had Removed from the Vagina of a Lunatic 16 Articles, including several stones, the neck of a bottle, and a glass-stopper. The offensive discharge drew attention to her condition and the foreign bodies were removed under an anæsthetic; (2) of a Successful Removal of a Dermoid Ovarian Cyst; and (3) of a case in which in a man an Intussusception Sloughed and came away per anum, the patient subsequently recovering.

*The Ulster Fisheries and Biology Association.*

A new association has just been established in Ulster for the investigation of the fauna and flora of the seas and freshwater loughs of Ulster with special reference to the economic aspects of our fisheries. The affairs of the association are to be managed by a council of 12 members elected annually, six to be elected by the members and associates of the association, two by Queen's College, Belfast, two by the Natural History and Philosophical Society, and two by the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club. It is proposed from the first to carry on work both in the sea and in Lough Neagh. The following is a rough estimate of the outlay needed to meet the requirements: £70 for rent or purchase of a cottage for use as a marine laboratory and fitting up of same; £250 for purchase of steam launch, dredges, apparatus, &c.; £200 per annum for salaries of skilled assistant and boatman; £100 per annum for incidental expenses, chemicals, bottles, books, &c. The council will elect an honorary director who will undertake the general supervision of the work of the staff of the association, both paid and voluntary, and will distribute such material as may be collected to members and associates and others for detailed examination and report. A contribution of £10 constitutes a life member; of £1 annually a yearly member; and of 10s. annually an associate. It is believed that Professor Gregg Wilson will be the first honorary director.

*Medical Witnesses at Inquests.*

At the adjourned quarterly meeting of the Londonderry county council the following resolution—inasmuch as it is illegal and not in compliance with the Act of Parliament—was rescinded by 13 votes to 6:—

That coroners in the future, in the first instance, summon as witness the medical gentleman who has been most recently in attendance on deceased person, provided he resides in the district; in case of sudden death where an inquest is considered necessary and in case no doctor has been in attendance then the medical practitioner residing nearest the place at which such death happens.

*Forster Green Hospital, Belfast.*

At the seventh annual meeting of the friends of this hospital, held on Jan. 26th, it was reported that a total of 195 intern patients had been treated, while in the extern department 619 new patients had presented themselves. The numbers all round show an increase. Financially the loss on the ordinary income during the year was £113 3s. 8d. The accounts for working expenses show £336 2s. 11d. on the wrong side. Mr. Forster Green has offered £150 as a donation if within an early date the public will clear off the remainder of the debt. A good suggestion was thrown out by one of the speakers that as in Scotland and England some of the trade-unionists had subsidised beds in the different sanatoriums something might be done in that connexion in Belfast.

Jan. 27th.

PARIS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

*The Notification of Infectious Diseases.*

THE law as to the notification of epidemic or infectious disease appeared in the *Journal Officiel* of Feb. 15th, 1902, but it was not to come into operation until a year from that date. The Government, therefore, before drawing up detailed regulations for the working of the law, sought the opinion of the Academy of Medicine. At the meeting of the Academy held on Jan. 13th M. Josias read the report of the committee which had been appointed to draw up the answer of the Academy to the Minister of the Interior. The necessity for fighting against the spread of infectious diseases by means of a systematic process of disinfection is recognised by everyone nowadays. This disinfection must be made obligatory if it is to be carried out in very poor houses, and in addition to disinfection there must be a system of notification. The responsibility for this notification falls on the medical man

in attendance who makes the diagnosis, and it is he who should notify the authorities. But in practice many difficulties arise, and not the least is the fact that by notifying a disease the medical man violates to a certain extent his oath of professional secrecy. Disinfection measures annoy some people and are always liable to injure bedding, furniture, and the like. So the public will have to be educated up to perceiving the necessity for such measures, and inasmuch as the present methods of disinfection are not likely to be improved upon those persons who cannot pay for the most efficient and most costly method—namely, disinfection by the vapour of formol—will only give their consent in a more or less grudging manner. M. Josias fully recognised all these difficulties and he gave it as his opinion that as the law had imposed the obligation of secrecy on medical men it could also release them from such obligation and that it must bow to this necessity. There are some infectious maladies—as, for instance, puerperal fever—with which there is no advantage in the neighbours being acquainted. It is almost impossible to deal officially with tuberculosis—the most dangerous of infectious diseases and one which above all others calls for disinfection, not only after death, but also during the course of the disease. A tuberculous patient is ill for months, or even for years, and it is impossible to disinfect his rooms and effects every eight days, nor can he be followed up throughout any changes of residence. No hotel proprietor or house-owner would under such conditions take him as a tenant. M. Josias came to the conclusion that tuberculosis could not be made a compulsorily notifiable disease, because a medical man would very likely hesitate to expose a tuberculous patient to official disinfection and would simply say that the patient was suffering from chronic bronchitis. M. Josias read the following list of diseases which are to be held as compulsorily notifiable and a declaration of which will be followed by compulsory disinfection: typhoid fever, typhus fever, variola and varioloid, scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, pneumonia and broncho-pneumonia, miliary fever, cholera and choleraic affections, plague, yellow fever, puerperal infections, ophthalmia in the newly-born, and epidemic cerebro-spinal meningitis. The notification of tuberculosis, whooping-cough, influenza, erysipelas, mumps, leprosy, the various forms of tinea, and the purulent conjunctivitis of adults is left optional. The notification must be made in duplicate by the practitioner in attendance to the mayor and to the prefect (in Paris to the Prefect of Police). The notification is to be made on a form torn from a book of such forms supplied with counterfoils and can be sent post free. Medical men would have preferred that the duty of notifying should have been imposed upon the head of the family affected, but the law considered that in case of any infraction of the regulations it would be easier to prosecute the medical man, and so the duty was imposed upon him.

*Sanitary Certificates for Dairymen.*

The municipal council of Paris has decided that it will issue "sanitary condition" certificates to any dairyman who shall apply for one, providing that he can show that his cowsheds have been passed as being sanitary and the cows as being in good health. The certificate will be valid for a period of four and a half months and will then be renewable if the premises and the cows are still in a healthy state. The certificate may be quoted in advertisements and on the milk cans sent out by the dairyman mentioned therein.

*The Federation of Anti-tuberculous Institutions.*

The federation of anti-tuberculous institutions, which had been founded for about a year and of the governing body of which the President of the Republic was chairman, was dissolved at a general meeting held at the Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes on Jan. 26th. Some five or six of the institutions out of the 125 which made up the federation have grouped themselves into a new association under the title of "Fédération Anti-tuberculeuse Française," with Professor Brouardel as President. The other institutions will remain independent.

Jan. 27th.

SWITZERLAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

*Rupture of the Mitral Valve.*

Dr. de Quervain and Dr. Bourquin of Chaux-de-Fonds have reported at some length a case of traumatic rupture of