

employment in mills which lessens the time they have to give to their homes, so that the use of ready-cooked tinned food is too prevalent. The result of this experiment will be watched with interest and all the more if the mothers are taught how, and are willing, to help themselves.

*Food Inspection on the Ship Canal.*

The various authorities along the Manchester Ship Canal have hitherto had the power of inspecting, and, if unsound, of condemning, all food-stuffs consigned to the port of Manchester, but this was attended with some disadvantages and the port sanitary authority in the meantime was without this power. Recently, however, the Local Government Board made a Provisional Order conferring these powers on the latter authority. In the first instance the corporation supported the application for the Order. Then, after the application had been made and duly inquired into without opposition, the Ship Canal Company represented that the powers asked for, if granted solely to the Port of Manchester, would be detrimental to the interests of the company by diverting traffic to other ports where these powers do not exist. The corporation, therefore, has been persuaded to ask the Local Government Board to defer the Order till a uniform change of regulations could be made in other ports, including (of course) Liverpool. It is a curious position, but the sooner there are no gaps in the arrangements for proper inspection of food coming into Manchester the better for the community. The revelations from Chicago add interest and piquancy to food questions.

*Royal College of Surgeons of England.*

Mr. George Arthur Wright, B.A., M.B. Oxon., F.R.C.S. Eng., is a candidate in the coming election to the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. He is professor of systematic surgery in the Victoria University and surgeon to the Manchester Royal Infirmary and was formerly examiner in surgery at the University of Oxford.

June 5th.

## NORTHERN COUNTIES NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

*Bequest to Gateshead Dispensary.*

By the will of the late Councillor George Gilhespy the sum of £10,000 was bequeathed to the Gateshead Dispensary "to be applied for the purposes of that institution in such manner as the governing body thereof might think fit, and without in any manner limiting or controlling their discretion as to the disposition of the same or the income therefrom" the testator expressed a desire that the income, or some part of it, might be applied for "the purpose of dealing with, or of assisting to deal with, cases of accident to persons injured in any of the factories, works, or other places of business in the borough of Gateshead or in the immediate vicinity thereof." This legacy, less duty thereon, has just been paid over to the treasurer of the institution.

*Hospital Sunday Fund.*

At a meeting of the committee of management and distribution of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Hospital Sunday Fund an interim cash statement was presented which showed that there was a balance of £395 3s. 3d. brought forward from the last account and that the collections in places of worship and manufactories amounted to £4129 5s. 4d.—£1787 10s. 1d. and £2341 15s. 3d. respectively. The receipts, with the balance referred to, totalled £4540 8s. 7d. and the expenses amounted to £332 3s. 11d. The fund is maintaining its position but it is a matter of regret that some of the large works have fallen away from the fund, also that church collections showed a decrease of £23 0s. 8d.

*Margarine as Butter.*

A flagrant case of substitution has just come to light in the police-courts. John Mardon, aged 50 years, a provision merchant in Middlesbrough of over 30 years' standing and an ex-town councillor, was charged with breaches of the Merchandise Marks Act and the Margarine Act by applying a false description to goods sold. It was stated that Mardon had a shop in South Shields as well as a stall in Middlesbrough Market and in other markets in the district. Owing to a communication from certain people in the trade, who found that they could not compete with Mardon, Mr. Faber, the Danish Agricultural Commissioner in London, visited

Middlesbrough in March last and caused purchases to be made at Mardon's stall. Samples of what was sold as pure Danish butter were sent to the public analyst who certified them to be margarine. Margarine at the time was being sold at 4d., 6d., and 8d. per pound, whilst the price of pure Danish butter was 1s. 2d., so that Mardon was reaping a rich harvest and at the same time preventing honest dealers from having a chance. The defence was raised that the cards "Pure Danish Butter" and "Margarine" had been put in the wrong places by mistake and the stipendiary was asked to regard the offence as one of carelessness. The magistrate could not accept the defence and as the prisoner had been convicted at Darlington and Middlesbrough he was sentenced to four months' imprisonment.

*Report on Tuberculosis.*

Dr. Henry E. Armstrong presented an interesting report on this subject to the sanitary committee of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The whole subject is carefully reviewed and such questions as the control of the milk-supply are fully gone into. He strongly insists on the urgent necessity of having properly trained and certified meat inspectors. In Newcastle there are three skilful and experienced officers but though their work is well done there is ample opportunity for the concealment and disposal of diseased meat in the slaughter-houses of so large a city. Dealing with the notification of tuberculosis Dr. Armstrong says that every sanitary authority should have the means of isolating early cases of consumption and other forms of tuberculosis attended by evacuations and discharges, and that the isolation of advanced cases is as urgently necessary in the interest of public health as for any infectious disease. To carry out the eradication of tuberculosis Dr. Armstrong advocates the establishment of a special authority—a national authority—to administer and to execute measures required for the national treatment and prevention of tuberculosis.

June 5th.

## WALES AND WESTERN COUNTIES NOTES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

*The Sanitary Condition of Merthyr Tydvil.*

DURING the past 40 years the sanitary condition of Merthyr Tydvil has been subjected on several occasions to inspection and report by officials of the Local Government Board and of the General Board of Health. It is a little difficult to decide to what particular circumstances should be ascribed the unsatisfactory position which Merthyr holds among other large industrial centres in England and Wales. It is true there have been periods of depression in the iron and coal trades, when there was little money to spend upon sanitary improvements, but the increase in the population from 46,378 in 1851 to 69,228 in 1901 alone shows that there have been prosperous times as well as unprosperous. The activity of the sanitary authority appears also to have been intermittent and for long periods it is to be feared that it has been more or less dormant. Although one of the first authorities to appoint a medical officer of health, the local board of health which was constituted in 1850 for a long time seemed to think that having installed this officer very little more remained for it to do. The members of the urban district council which succeeded the board of health in 1895 were apparently imbued with the same spirit for until quite recently the number of sanitary inspectors was quite insufficient for the needs of the district. The latest inspection on behalf of the Local Government Board was made by Dr. J. Spencer Low in the autumn of last year. Dr. Low's report, which has just been published, discloses a very distinct improvement since the previous official inspection but it also shows that there is still a great deal to be done in the way of increasing the comfort and enjoyment of life of a large section of the population of the town which in November last was raised to the rank of a municipal borough. An account of the unsatisfactory condition of many of the houses in the borough forms a large part of Dr. Low's report and he expresses the opinion that if better and more abundant dwellings were available for the working-class population there would follow in due course a disappearance of existing insanitary areas as

well as a reduction in the general death-rate of 22·0 per 1000, of the zymotic death-rate of 4·6 per 1000, and of the infantile mortality-rate of 204 per 1000 which prevailed in 1905. About four years ago the sanitary authority erected 100 houses which are let at a monthly rental of 22s. 6d. Each house contains two living rooms and a pantry on the ground floor and three bedrooms above. In the yard are a coal-house and a water-closet and there is a strip of garden attached to each house. There is no difficulty in finding tenants for these houses but in some instances the rooms have been sublet and overcrowding has resulted. These houses are evidently satisfactory for Dr. Low advises the erection by the council of still more. Another recommendation which he makes is the appointment of one or more female health visitors in view of the enormous infantile mortality in the district. He considers that much good would accrue if such visitors were appointed solely for the purpose of inducing women to feed and to wash their children properly and to keep their homes clean. He also advises that nuisances should receive the immediate and sustained attention of the council and that a refuse destructor and a public slaughter-house should be provided.

#### *Winsley Sanatorium.*

The Winsley sanatorium for consumptive patients residing in the city of Bristol and in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire has been occupied by patients for about 18 months, so that the first annual report of the working of the institution is of interest. The original buildings provided accommodation for 60 patients but chalets have recently been erected for eight more. The total capital cost was about £33,000 and the weekly cost of maintenance, which was estimated at 25s. per patient, was actually during the past 12 months 24s. 5d. There is still a debt of nearly £14,000 on the land and buildings in spite of the principle which was adopted when the institution was established. That principle was essentially the allocation of beds to subscribers in the proportion of one bed for each donation of £250 and an annual subscription of £65. In this way the corporation of Bristol has the control of 20 beds and the corporations of Bath, Gloucester, and Swindon have also secured the right to nominate patients. There are still seven beds to be allotted in the manner indicated. During 1905 there were 180 patients admitted into the sanatorium, 129 were discharged, and two died. 17 patients showed no sign of improvement on discharge, 30 showed marked improvement but required still further treatment, 33 were considerably improved, and 49 were sufficiently improved to be able to resume work of a suitable character.

#### *Vaccination Prosecutions.*

At the meeting of the Clutton (Somerset) board of guardians held on June 1st a member, in accordance with notice of motion, moved that, seeing the circular issued to magistrates under Section 2 of the Vaccination Act of 1898, by the Home Secretary, no prosecution be authorised by the Clutton board of guardians against any person who had applied to court for a certificate of exemption and had been refused; this was seconded, but after some discussion it was eventually decided to send a letter to the vaccination officer calling attention to the Home Secretary's circular and stating that the guardians were of opinion that where applications had been made to the magistrates and refused prosecutions ought not to be ordered and it was also decided to send a statement to that effect to the Local Government Board.

#### *The Royal Sanitary Institute.*

A provincial sessional meeting of the Royal Sanitary Institute was held at Bournemouth on May 26th. Mr. P. W. G. Nunn, the medical officer of health of Bournemouth, read a paper on Sanitary Administration in a Health Resort. In the course of a discussion which followed Dr. Joseph Groves, the medical officer of health of the Isle of Wight rural district, insisted that every resident in a district governed by a local authority had the right to demand the sanitary condition which the law afforded him but in a health resort they had to do more than that, they had to recognise the sentiment of hospitality and to take all possible measures that visitors should not be exposed to any avoidable risks. Mr. W. B. Barclay, the medical officer of health of Weymouth, alluded to the overcrowding of health resorts.

June 5th.

## SCOTLAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

#### *The Physiological Society in Edinburgh.*

A MEETING of the Physiological Society was held in Edinburgh on June 2nd. The meeting place was the physiological department of the University and there was a large gathering of members from various parts of England and elsewhere. The members of the Edinburgh Pathological Club were asked to meet with them but the communications were practically confined to members of the Physiological Society. The meeting nominally began at 9.30 A.M. but the first hour and a half were devoted to social greetings and to the examination of a number of microscopic demonstrations illustrating the communications to be submitted formally to the meeting. The most interesting of these was a series illustrating tissue changes in rats fed on an exclusive flesh diet. This series showed the effect on the thyroid gland, on the kidneys, on the uterus, on the osseous system, on the skin, on the male reproductive organs, and on the structure and development of teeth. In the afternoon the meeting devoted itself to recreation at North Berwick. There was a golf match for those who wished to play over the popular links there, while a cruise to the Bass Rock and a land expedition to Tantallon Castle were provided for non-golfers. In the evening there was a dinner in the North British Station Hotel.

#### *Treatment of Pauper Consumptives in Edinburgh.*

An important report has been prepared and submitted to the Edinburgh parish council on the treatment of consumptive patients in the Craiglockhart and Craighleith poorhouses by Dr. E. Carmichael and Dr. R. S. Aitchison, the visiting medical officers to these institutions. As regards male patients, 167 passed through the wards, the period of residence varying from three days to 19 months. Only five were regarded as cured. They considered 90 per cent. of the cases as incurable. At least 34 returned for treatment, some as often as six times. As regards females, 92 patients passed through the wards, only two of these being considered as cured. In their report the medical officers indicate to their board that the open-air treatment should not be thought of as a cure but merely as a potent help in the treatment of tuberculous disease. From this standpoint the results are regarded as satisfactory. The length of time required to effect anything like a cure in the class of patients dealt with was very prolonged. Some of the male patients have been in the sanatorium for over a year and although they have put on weight the physical signs of disease in the lungs remain very marked. Some improve greatly at first and then go downhill. Occasionally these improve again if removed from the open air to the ward and one or two even by returning to work. In fact, to have these patients, especially the men, loafing all these months is bad for them and is sometimes a real hindrance to treatment. The point arises, Should those patients be detained, if they will stay, till they are regarded as cured, or should the aim be merely to get them well enough to work and then advise them to leave? Dr. Carmichael and Dr. Aitchison believe that it would be a benefit to the patients if they were advised to go when they were fit for work or if there were some intermediate place established between the hospital and the house where they might have light work. If they are allowed out to return to their small, badly-ventilated houses or lodgings they run a great risk of relapsing.

#### *The Royal Society of Edinburgh.*

This learned body has been much perturbed at the thought of being turned out of its present abode. An influential deputation waited upon the Secretary for Scotland when he was in Edinburgh on June 1st and laid before him their position. They were treated quite frankly and informed that there was no alternative, in view of other interests, but to take their present rooms from them. They were, however, assured that their annual grant from the Government was not to be disturbed; they were also assured that the Government considered it to be its duty to do all it could to help them to get suitable accommodation elsewhere. He suggested, however, that a scheme or schemes should be prepared by the Royal Society, perhaps in association with other societies, and submitted to the Government and to him.