

THE REGISTRARSHIP OF BIRTHS ETC. IN CRUSHEEN DISPENSARY DISTRICT: ENNIS UNION.

Dr. W. H. Hynes, medical officer of Crusheen dispensary district, was the registrar of births for his district, but some weeks since he was removed by the Registrar-General for Ireland for the alleged reason that he delayed answering his communications. A successor was appointed without any protest from Dr. Hynes, as, from a monetary point of view, the office was of little value; but, on consideration, he concluded that the question of his removal by the Registrar-General was one of very great importance to dispensary medical officers in Ireland. The gentleman appointed having resigned, Dr. Hynes applied for the post, and this application was received by the guardians some few weeks since. Having heard his explanation, the guardians unanimously passed a resolution to the effect that they considered the Registrar-General had exercised high-handed authority in removing Dr. Hynes in such a summary manner, and that, before such a course had been adopted, the matter should have been referred to them. They further asked the Registrar-General to reconsider the matter and reappoint Dr. Hynes, stating, at the same time, that the "unanswered communications" complained of by the Registrar-General were addressed to Dr. Hynes during his absence on leave. I am informed that the Registrar-General has refused to appoint Dr. Hynes, and that a person whom he selected for the appointment has declined to accept it. An official from the General Register Office, under these circumstances, was sent down from Dublin, where for the past ten days he has tried to get the registrarship accepted, but without success. So the matter stands, and at present there is no registration going on in the Crusheen district, which is rather a serious matter. Dr. Hynes and the guardians complain of the want of courtesy in not consulting them on the subject, and refusing to endorse their recommendation of Dr. Hynes as a competent official. If, as alleged, the appointment of registrar according to the Act of Parliament is vested in the local authority, I cannot see how the Registrar-General can make the appointment. The salary of the post is only about £4 per annum!

Dublin, June 14th.

PARIS.

(From our own Correspondent.)

MASSAGE IN FRACTURES.

DR. GEORGES BERNE made an interesting communication to the Société Médicale de l'Elysée on the treatment of certain fractures by massage. After showing the importance of a good venous and lymphatic circulation in fractured limbs, he insisted upon the necessity of keeping the joints in the neighbourhood movable and supple. It is particularly in fractures of the radius and fibula that massage is useful, the inferior epiphyses being supported as it were by natural splints in the shape of the contiguous bones. Where there is not displacement, extensive centripetal *effleurage*, commenced early in the treatment, will promote the absorption of the blood extravasated around the fracture. Von Mosengeil has shown that massage displaces effusions through the lymphatic network of the cellular tissue, and the same thing occurs when centripetal pressure is applied above the seat of fracture. The rapid retraction of the tendinous sheaths of the fingers when they are immobilised is a matter of common experience. Dr. Berne maintains that this accident, almost inevitable with the usual treatment, may be obviated by massage. He states that he was the first to investigate this point in the treatment of fractures of the fibula, which he has treated with complete success by massage for the last three years. In 1884 a patient with a fracture of the lower end of the fibula without displacement was treated by Dr. Coupard and himself in the following manner:—Massage was employed from the very first day, the limb being placed in a plaster *gouttière*, from which it was removed every two days for this purpose. After each sitting of a quarter of an hour the apparatus was reapplied. From the fifteenth day the apparatus was laid aside, and the patient was able to walk without difficulty. The limb was in no way atrophied, and all the movements of the tibio-tarsal and tarsal articulations were natural. The temperature was normal. Other cases

in the wards of M. Duplay at the Lariboisière Hospital have shown that there exists no better treatment of fractures of the fibula than *relative* immobilisation in a movable plaster bandage and periodical massage. The mean duration of the treatment by this method is from fifteen to seventeen days, instead of thirty, an important point, especially in hospital practice. Dr. Berne is also an advocate for massage in fractures about the elbow and patella, but he urges the necessity of caution whenever there is displacement or wound of the integument. In all cases, however, he maintains that manipulations should be performed by an expert scientific masseur, never by the so-called medical rubber.

SWEATING SICKNESS.

An epidemic of *suette miliaire* has reigned for some time past in several districts of the department of Vienne, principally in that of Montmorillon, but it has now spread to the surrounding country. At Bussière-Poite-Vinne, a village near Mezières, there are 250 cases amongst 2300 inhabitants, and more than twenty deaths have already occurred, some of them with extreme rapidity. A commission, consisting of MM. Chantemesse, Thoinot, and Descoust, has been sent by the Government to investigate the matter, and M. Brouardel has also gone for the same purpose.

PASTEURIANA.

The *Bulletin Médical* publishes a letter addressed by M. Pasteur to the Imperial and Royal Society of Vienna with reference to Dr. von Frisch's strictures on his method, and the comments thereon of Professor Billroth. M. Pasteur points out that the experiments performed by Dr. von Frisch, the results of which were unfavourable to his method, were made chiefly upon rabbits. He discusses their value, and concludes that "these facts not only ruin the experiments in question, but shake all confidence in the whole work of Dr. von Frisch. We must conclude either that Dr. von Frisch is a bad operator, or else that he allowed the virus, which he obtained in Paris, to become deteriorated." At the last meeting of the Vienna Society, reported in the *Semaine Médicale*, Dr. von Frisch went over the same ground as in his previous communication. He maintained that M. Pasteur's reply was not a refutation of his objections, and said that he was confident the future would decide in his favour. M. Ullmann, on the other hand, submitted three provisional conclusions to the Society, which were as follows: 1. Animals do not become rabid by inoculation with the preventive virus. 2. Some animals can be made refractory to rabies by the preventive inoculations. 3. The statistics of the preventive inoculations made (by M. Ullmann) in man appear favourable to Pasteur's method.

Paris, June 15th.

Obituary.

W. A. B. McCABE, F.R.C.S.

WE regret to record the death of this promising young surgeon, which took place at Sydney on April 18th, at the early age of twenty-five. He was born in Jersey, and received his early education at the Victoria College, St. Heliers. In 1879 he entered in the Faculty of Science of University College, London, and a year later, after passing the Preliminary Scientific Examination with honours, he commenced medical study. After a successful career as a student, he obtained the post of house-surgeon to University College Hospital in 1885, and at the commencement of the following winter session he was appointed Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy in the College. This post he was obliged to relinquish on account of failing health after holding it for one year. As the winter advanced the symptoms of phthisis became more marked, and he was advised to take a voyage to Australia. Unfortunately severe hæmoptysis came on when he was near the end of the voyage, and he landed at Sydney almost in a dying state. Mr. McCabe was characterised in all he did by a conscientious and honest desire to do his best, and to his unsparing devotion to his duties may in part be attributed his early death. He was a good anatomist and a popular teacher. His genial character endeared him to all who knew him, and his abilities and enthusiasm gave promise, had his life been spared, of a brilliant career in the profession he had chosen.