

20 of puerperal fever, 11 of enteric fever, 6 of poliomyelitis, and 4 of cerebro-spinal meningitis.

Midland Medical Society.

The address at the inaugural meeting of the Midland Medical Society held on Oct. 31st was given by Dr. Charles Mercier. His topic was "Drunkenness and the Physiological Effect of Alcohol." Mr. Christopher Martin presided, and many medical men from all over the Midlands attended. Dr. Mercier's address was marked by his usual force and lucidity, and was enlivened throughout with witty phrases and humorous applications, which convulsed his audience. Without ignoring in the least the evil effects of alcohol, he contended with great emphasis that England to-day was a sober nation, and that the anti-alcohol agitators were intemperate in language and blind to facts. He pointed out that the proper scientific attitude towards the disease of alcoholism was not one of mere denunciation but of patient inquiry into causes. The task they should set themselves, if they wished to diminish the small remnant of drunkards that still remained amongst them, was not to cry "Bogey!" nor yet to bid the drunkards observe how vastly superior to the rest of mankind were the people who did not take beer with their meals, but to search out the reasons for drinking.

Birmingham Medical Mission.

The annual meeting of this charity was held on Oct. 31st, the rector of Birmingham (Canon Willink) presiding. Dr. Bagster Wilson, in a statement as to the work of the mission, said they existed to pick up those who were maimed in the traffic and whirlpool of city life. The classes they dealt with might be divided into the aged, prematurely or otherwise, the ageing, hard-beset parents, children, and infants with their mothers. They endeavoured to prevent not only the maiming of physiques but the maiming of characters.

Nov. 5th.

MANCHESTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Ancoats Hospital: Annual Report.

THE eighty-fourth annual report of the Ancoats Hospital shows that the number of accidents treated during the year was 24,747 and of out-patients 11,705, as compared with 23,390 and 10,547 respectively in the previous year. During the last ten years the numbers have trebled, and many would-be in-patients had to be refused owing to the lack of the necessary accommodation. Out of a total income of £7412, £3908 have been received in subscriptions and £355 from the Hospital Saturday Fund. The expenditure was £10,407, but £1000 of this were spent on necessary repairs. The net balance due to the bankers for the year was £1240.

Salford Royal Hospital: Annual Meeting; a Generous Offer; Tribute to the late Dr. J. Dixon Mann.

The annual meeting of the subscribers to the Salford Royal Hospital was held on Oct. 24th. Owing to the lack of funds 35 of the additional beds in the new extension remained unoccupied. The deficit on the extension fund is about £10,000. The accident cases had increased from 13,600 to 14,836, and the opinion was expressed that the insurance companies and the work-people should testify their appreciation by subscribing more liberally to the funds of the hospital. The deficit on the year's working was £947. The sum received from the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Funds was only £429, as against £981 last year, and this though the hospital is now almost double the size. The new extension cost £66,500, and there was still a large deficit, which, counting everything, now stood at £12,000. This additional sum must be obtained if the hospital is to be free from debt at the end of the year. The president of the hospital, Sir William Mather, suggested to those persons who had it in their minds to do something for the Salford Hospital out of their estates, that it would not be a bad idea to anticipate the event. He personally guaranteed the sum of £5000 to be paid at the end of the coming year if £5000 could be contributed from other sources. If the £5000 could not be arrived at, he would guarantee the equivalent of the amount raised. At the conclusion of the meeting Sir William Mather unveiled a bronze tablet in the hospital to commemorate the work of the late Dr. Dixon Mann in the

relief of the sick poor and the advancement of medical science. Dr. Dixon Mann was appointed in 1882, and was still on the active staff at the time of his death, and he was a great helper in forwarding the extension scheme.

Cost of Long-time Lunatics.

It is well known that the life of some lunatics is prolonged, and should they happen to be placed under control at an early period of their existence the cost of their maintenance mounts up steadily, even though, as in the case of pauper lunatics, the amount paid for it may be less than half a sovereign a week, or about £25 per year. Some patients have been in asylums since the late "sixties." The Prestwich board of guardians has spent £6226 on the maintenance of six lunatics who have been under its care for periods varying from 30 to 48 years. This is a not uncommon experience in asylums. Some patients have been in Whittingham Asylum since it was opened in 1873.

Report of Medical Officer of Health of the County.

The twenty-third annual report of Mr. E. Sergeant, county medical officer of health, has just been issued. It shows a birth-rate of 22·64 per 1000 of the population for last year, as against 22·48 for 1910. Having regard to the fact that the county population for 1910 was miscalculated, it turns out that the rate for 1911 is actually the lowest on record. The average for the last ten years was 25·09. The general death-rate was 15·05; or 2·32 per 1000 above the previous year. The infant mortality reached 144 per 1000 births, owing to the exceptional temperature of the third quarter of the year. The total of births was 39,134 (19,917 males and 19,217 females), being a decrease of 1190 births. Industrial areas have the highest birth-rates, while the lowest rates are in the best-class districts. In the districts with the highest birth-rates, 32·4 per 1000, the death-rate was equal to 18·3 per 1000 and the infant mortality 173 per 1000 births. In the districts with the lowest birth-rates, averaging 13·3, the mortality was 10·9 and the rate of infant deaths 79. Pulmonary tuberculosis caused 1528 deaths, or 87 more than in 1910, but the average rate is exactly the same as the decade 1901-11.

After-care and Residence of Inebriates Released from Reformatories.

The Manchester justices have carefully considered the provisions of the Inebriates Bill now before Parliament, more especially as it deals with the care of women inebriates who have been discharged from such a reformatory as Langho. Such discharged persons it is proposed should be placed on probation for 12 months, and during that time should be under the care of a guardian to be appointed by the board of management of the reformatory. The committee unanimously agreed to recommend that whenever a guardian having the care of a discharged inebriate should consider it necessary during the probation period he should have the power to prescribe the place of residence of the inebriate, and that the person should not be allowed to leave that place without the written consent of the guardian. It was therefore proposed that Subsection (e) of Section 26 of the Bill, which reads, "He shall not change his abode without previously giving notice of his new address to the guardian," should be altered so as to read "He shall, if required so to do, reside at a place of abode selected for him by the guardian, and he shall not change such abode without the written consent previously obtained of the guardian so to do. He shall not change any abode selected by himself without previously giving notice of his intended new abode to the guardian."

Nov. 4th.

LIVERPOOL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine.

THE school has arrangements in hand for the despatch of an important expedition to Jamaica and the West Indies, this making the twenty-ninth expedition of the school. The chairman of the school, Sir William Lever, will proceed shortly on an extended tour in West Africa, and will be able to see for himself the circumstances under which Europeans have to work in that climate, and the practical benefits that have resulted from the tropical school's propaganda against disease in the tropics.

Requests to Liverpool Charities and the University of Liverpool.

By the will of the late Mr. Thomas Bartlett the following institutions have benefited: The Royal Infirmity, the Royal Southern Hospital, the David Lewis Northern Hospital, and the Stanley Hospital, each a bed. A bequest of £20,000 to the Home for Epileptics at Maghull, to be called after the testator. A sum is bequeathed to the University of Liverpool for establishing a scholarship for engineering students. The legacies are to be free from legacy duty.

Heswall Sanatorium.

At the weekly meeting of the West Derby guardians held on Oct. 23rd the minute of a special committee appointed to consider the proposals of the West Derby, Liverpool, and Toxteth Park joint hospital committee to negotiate for the sale of Heswall Sanatorium to the Local Insurance Committee was discussed. The clerk reported regarding the financial aspect of the proposed sale, also as to the original outlay on the land and buildings, and on subsequent repairs and improvements thereto. The special committee had agreed to a recommendation that the request of the Insurance Committee, as represented by the medical officer of health of Liverpool, be acceded to, subject to the three Poor-law authorities concerned being reimbursed to the extent of the total outlay on the scheme, and to their being indemnified as regarded all existing liabilities in connexion therewith; also subject to preferential treatment being reserved for the admission to the sanatorium of any urgent special cases from the three unions. The guardians eventually adopted the recommendations of the special committee.

Lanaca in Lancashire.

An interesting report has been submitted by the representatives of the Liverpool city council upon the Lancashire asylums board, from which it appears that the average number of patients in the asylums during the year was 11,357—a decrease at the end of the year of 11, as against an increase last year of 39. Adding those in licensed houses, work-houses, or with relatives, the total for the whole county is 14,806, as against 14,516 in December, 1910. The number of inmates in the asylums chargeable to Liverpool on Dec. 31st, 1911, was 2866. To these must be added 467 persons in workhouses, &c., making the total of insane persons at the end of 1911 3333. Taking the estimated population of Liverpool at 749,500, this number gives a ratio of 1 to 225, as against 1 to 324 for the whole county, 1 to 444 in the administrative county, and 1 to 269 in England and Wales in January, 1912; and 1 to 535 in England and Wales in the year 1859. The increase in the insane under care on Jan. 1st, 1912, compared with Jan. 1st, 1859, was 269 per cent., and compared with Jan. 1st, 1869, about 155·1 per cent., whilst the increase in population in similar periods was only 85·6 per cent. and 64·6 per cent. respectively. From these figures it would appear that insanity has increased at an alarming rate, but the ratio of pauper lunatics to the whole population has only increased 3·52 per 10,000 in the ten years ended January last, though the persons under care at the same date show an increase of 22·5 per cent. compared with a decade ago. The ratio of known insane in 1859 per 10,000 was 18·67, compared with 37·12 in 1912, or an increase of 98·8 per cent.

Royal Albert Institution, Lancaster.

The annual meeting of supporters of this institution was held on Oct. 28th at the Liverpool town hall under the presidency of the Lord Mayor. Out of the 714 feeble-minded individuals now being educated, cared for, and employed by the institution, 68 are from the Liverpool district, and the cost of these during the past financial year has exceeded the contributions of the city by no less than £500. An interesting development of the work of the institution has been in the direction of an extension of the farm and industrial colony system, which has been found by experience to have the best ameliorative effect on the patients. The estate has been increased to 205 acres by the purchase of an adjoining farm, and the committee has undertaken the immediate formation of a farm colony for 40 inmates, for which purpose a commodious building will be erected.

Nov. 5th.

SCOTLAND.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

The Edinburgh Infants' Home.

THE need of a home for unmarried mothers and their babies has impressed itself upon those who have had experience of rescue work in Edinburgh. The Lauriston Rescue Home receives girls for a short time before their confinement, which is conducted in the Maternity Hospital, and when they leave this institution at the expiry of ten days they are completely lost sight of as a rule. It is impossible for the majority of these women to return home with an illegitimate child, they therefore on leaving the maternity hospital seek to board out the baby and to find work for themselves. This is bad, both morally and physically, for the mother, and more so for the child, thus deprived of home, mother's milk, and proper nursing. Anyone who is associated with the out-patient work of a children's hospital knows of the number of illegitimate babies who are seen only when *in extremis*, and whose condition has been brought about simply by want of proper care. This home has therefore been started on a small scale, to try and correct this evil, and to give the baby a healthy natural start in life, and to help the mothers—often quite young girls—to find good homes where the baby may eventually be boarded out, and generally to strengthen and develop the mother's character, so that when she leaves the home she may be able to lead a better life. The home is, therefore, for the unmarried mother and her first child. She must nurse the baby at the breast and must stay at least two months. No mother is kept longer than nine months, but on leaving the home the mother may leave the baby there till it is a year old on payment of 5s. weekly. The mother has to pay 5s. weekly for the first two weeks, after which 2s. 6d. weekly is obtained from the father, if possible, and 2s. 6d. from the mother if she has money, otherwise she is kept free on condition of doing work for the home. A donation and subscription list has been opened, and it is hoped will have the full support of the charitable public.

A Public Medical Service Scheme.

At a general meeting of the Edinburgh and Leith Medical Practitioners' Association a discussion was held as to the possibilities of a public medical service for Edinburgh district. There was a large attendance, and a scheme which had been considered by the committee was debated by a considerable number of those present, but no definite conclusions were arrived at.

Small-pox in Kirkcaldy.

Fourteen days have now elapsed since the last case was reported from the Linktown district of Kirkcaldy. This formed the seat of the epidemic, and most of the cases have been located there. The incubation period of the disease has practically expired since the case in Dysart was reported, and that district also remains free of further infection.

Typhoid Epidemic in Aberdeen.

Sixty-two cases of typhoid fever have now been notified in the city of Aberdeen. The source of infection has not yet been conclusively determined, and the medical officer of health again urges upon the general public the desirability of boiling all milk and water before use.

Highland and Islands Medical Service.

At the Highlands and Islands Medical Service committee meeting on Oct. 29th, at Oban, Sir John A. Dewar, Bart., M.P., presiding, the following gentlemen from South Uist and Barra gave evidence: Dr. Riordan, Daliburgh; Rev. Father MacDougall, Daliburgh; Rev. Father Hugh Cameron, Castlebay; and Rev. Father MacPhail, Eriskay. They showed that the problem of providing adequate medical attendance in those islands was a peculiarly difficult one. Medical men could not easily be induced to settle there because of their isolation and extreme poverty. Even when the salary paid by the parish council was proportionately high for the number of paupers, the medical men did not remain long. A club system of payment of 5s. per "smoke" had been tried, but so far had not been successful, the total amount of the club fees plus the parish council salary affording only inadequate remuneration.