

THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

REPORT OF COUNCIL, SESSION 1898-99.

1. The Council is able to congratulate the members on the progress the Society has made during the last year: 88 fellows, 10 members, and 5 associates have been elected; 19 fellows have resigned, and 4 have died; 4 members and 4 associates have resigned. There are now on the roll of the Society 750 fellows, 56 ordinary members, and 77 associates. There are in addition 29 honorary fellows; the Society has lost by death Lords Herschell and Playfair and Sir Douglas Galton.

2. The customary number of meetings of the Society have been held during the Session, and your Council are pleased to be able to report that they have been well attended, and considerable interest has been taken in the subjects brought up for discussion.

At the Annual Meeting in October Dr. Gwynn devoted his Presidential Address to point out the Duty of the Medical Officer of Health as a Public Teacher. In November Dr. W. H. Symons laid before the Society the result of an inquiry into the Relation of Cancer to the Dwelling. Dr. A. Newsholme opened a discussion at the January meeting on the Prevention of Phthisis, with special reference to the question of notification. In February Dr. F. J. Allan read a paper on Diphtheria, dealing with the duration of infection after an attack, and on the use of Antitoxin as a Prophylactic. Dr. Alfred Ashby contributed a paper on the Duties of Medical Officers in relation to Small-pox in View of the Altered State of the Law relating to Vaccination, in March; and in April Dr. Alfred Hill introduced the subject of Antiseptics in Food, which led to an important discussion.

The Provincial Meeting of the Society was held at Stratford-on-Avon, when an interesting and appropriate address was delivered by the President, Dr. Gwynn, on Shakespeare and Sanitation.

The Branches of the Society have also held meetings in their own districts, when matters referred to them by the Council have been considered, as well as many valuable original papers. These have been reported fully in PUBLIC HEALTH.

3. Your Council held five ordinary meetings during the year, and in addition there have been a considerable number of meetings of committees. Among the subjects which received their attention may be mentioned the question of Superannuation, the Amendment of the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, the Census of 1901, the Classification of Deaths from Diarrhoea, the Necessity for a more Definite Certificate of Vaccination, the Payment of Expenses of Members attending the

Council Meetings, and many Bills before Parliament, where their progress has been carefully watched by the Parliamentary Committee, and action taken where considered advisable. Conferences have been attended by delegates from the Council in regard to Superannuation, Registration of Plumbers, Sanitary Inspectors' Examination Board, the London Government Bill, etc.

4. It is with regret that the Council have to report the resignation of Dr. H. Manley as one of the Hon. Secretaries; Dr. Mitchell Wilson has been appointed in his stead.

HERBERT MANLEY,

FRANCIS J. ALLAN,

Hon. Secretaries.

August 30th, 1899.

REPORT OF THE EDITOR.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL OF THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.

GENTLEMEN,—

The year which has elapsed since I presented my last report has been so uneventful that I find it difficult to frame a further report of any value. The first volume in the new form, the eleventh of the Journal, is in your hands, and criticism thereof rests with you. I desire here to place on record my sincere thanks to Dr. Allan, our Hon. Secretary, for kindly undertaking my work during the two months that I was in the grip of that untamed foe influenza.

With regard to the future, I would again express my desire for material for publication as independent supplements, for which original work, either in the laboratory, the office, or the field, is most suitable. Under existing arrangements, I feel that sufficient use is not made of the annual reports issued by medical officers of health throughout the country. Barren reviews of such documents I have always held to be unsuited to the aims of the Journal. Comparison and compilation appear to promise more instruction, but up to the present time it has not been possible to undertake such work. From the examinations made from year to year, it appears desirable that an attempt should be made to secure the *universal* use of a table such as that known as "Table III." of the Society, in all reports. It would then be possible to make strict comparison between one district and another, and to group reports of counties, etc. A "Sanitary Gazetteer," containing information as to the geological formation of each district, outlines of the conditions of life, sewerage, water-supply, and other matters