

*SOUTH AFRICAN MEDICAL CONGRESS, JUNE, 1905.*

DR. CHARLES H. PORTER, D.P.H., has made the following Report to the Public Health Committee of the Johannesburg Municipality, of which he is the very able and efficient Medical Officer of Health :—

The South African Medical Congress was held at Maritzburg, under the Presidency of Dr. Hyslop of that city, from the 12th to the 17th of June, 1905, inclusive. This period was fully occupied by the consideration of varied and interesting medical subjects, and, thanks to the organising ability and great personal kindness and hospitality of Dr. Hyslop and his Natal confrères, was in every way most successful and enjoyable.

On Tuesday, June 13th, in the Medical Section, a very thoughtful and suggestive address was delivered by Dr. Ramsbottom, of Bloemfontein (President of the Medical Council of the Orange River Colony) on "The Threatened Conquest of South Africa by the *Bacillus Tuberculosis*." Dr. Ramsbottom pointed out that in the past tuberculosis was a comparatively unknown disease in South Africa, but that of late years it had markedly increased, was increasing, and ought to be checked. This he attributed in no small degree to the unrestricted and unsupervised immigration from Europe of consumptive patients, many of whom, on arrival, are both without resources and in a hopeless stage of the disease. In addition, they have generally little or no idea of the precautions necessary to prevent the communication of their illness to others. These poor people consequently drift into cheap and uncomfortable boarding-houses, often sleep in crowded bedrooms, and not only end their lives under most unhappy conditions, but, undoubtedly, do much to disseminate this scourge both amongst natives and whites. Dr. Ramsbottom truly said that no more heartless and improper advice can be given by medical men in Europe than to counsel such poor sufferers to come to South Africa; and whilst, very rightly, he did not suggest that measures of unqualified exclusion should be devised and enforced against consumptive immigrants, he strongly urged that such immigration should be jointly regulated by the South African Colonies, and the patients received into proper

Government sanatoria, or otherwise adequately supervised. The matter was subsequently discussed in the Public Health Section, and Dr. Jasper Anderson, Medical Officer of Health for Capetown, in the course of an interesting paper on the same subject, mentioned that an attempt, as regards Cape Colony, to legislate in this direction is embodied in Section 63 of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Bill, to be considered next Session. There was entire unanimity on the importance of this matter, and it was resolved :—

1. That it is the imperative duty of the South African Colonial Governments to take up the matter of the prevention of phthisis, including the regulation and supervision of the immigration of consumptives.
2. That a representative medical committee, consisting of two delegates from each South African British Colony, be formed, and that Delagoa be asked to nominate one delegate.
3. That this committee prepare a draft scheme to be submitted to next year's South African Medical Congress.
4. That the action of this South African Inter-colonial Medical Committee be communicated to the International Medical Congress which is to meet at Lisbon in 1906.
5. That the suggested Cape legislation on the subject be approved.

Papers on Leprosy, Cerebro-spinal Meningitis, Scurvy, and "Amaas" (or Kaffir Pox), were also read in the Medical Section.

The afternoon of Tuesday, June 13th, was devoted to an inspection of the small but excellent Government Bacteriological Laboratory, which is very ably directed by Mr. Watkins-Pitchford, F.R.C.V.S., assisted by Dr. Watkins-Pitchford. In addition to usual laboratory work, these gentlemen here prepare the vaccine used in Natal, and it was incidentally stated that during the recent outbreak of small-pox £25,000 was spent on vaccination in the colony. The laboratory also boasts of a collection of the particularly repulsive poisonous snakes of Natal, and possesses a good meteorological station, in which is included a very ingenious apparatus (on the same principle as one devised by Pettenkofer of Munich) for recording the variations of ground-water. Reference will again be made to this.

Whilst at the laboratory a copy was obtained of a report on "The Efficacy of Various Disinfectants," prepared by Mr. Pitch-

ford for the Natal Government, at the request of the General Manager of Railways. This report is quite the best and most comprehensive of its kind with which Dr. Porter is acquainted, and is based on the results of Messrs. Pitchford's own exhaustive comparative trials (involving 2,400 cultivation experiments) of the germ-killing power of the disinfectants in question. Their results are somewhat different to those recently collated by Dr. Porter, from various sources, and are thus summarised :—

*Cost of Disinfectant Efficient in General Germicidal Efficiency to*

*1 Gallon of Pure Carbolic Acid :—*

Cyllin	4 1/10d.	(1 gall. at 4/-)	= 11.6	gals. Carbolic.
Izal	7 1/10d.	„ 4/-	= 7.0	„
Lysol	1.10 8/10d.	„ 8/-	= 4.2	„
Quibell's	1/3d.	„ 2/6	= 2.0	„
Formalin	6/0½d.	„ 5/6	= 0.91	„

On the forenoon of Wednesday, June 14th, Dr. Porter, favoured with a permit, went through the Maritzburg Prison.

In the afternoon the Public Health Section was opened by an Address sent by Dr. Turner, M.O.H., Transvaal, on "Some Circumstances influencing Common Causes of Mortality in England and South Africa." Amongst other considerations, Dr. Turner referred to the high mortality amongst infants from digestive disorders, and the consequent importance of breast feeding and pure milk supplies. Lieut.-Col. Porter, R.A.M.C., Bloemfontein, described the septic tank and bacterial bed installation at Pretoria ; and Dr. Hill, Health Officer for Natal, gave a most interesting account of the recent outbreak of malaria in that colony. Perhaps its chief application to Johannesburg is the possibility of the malaria mosquito being imported and getting a footing here ; in this connection, Dr. Dumat of Durban expressed the conviction which Dr. Hill did not entirely share, that in the case of the recent outbreak on the Natal coast the insect had been introduced by the new railway from Zululand.

The "Medical Inspection of School Children" was advocated by Dr. Boyd of Pretoria, and a resolution to that effect was adopted by the Congress, as well as one deprecating the employment in schools of teachers suffering from tuberculosis. Dr. Watkins-Pitchford recorded a number of very interesting observations on the relation of enteric fever in Natal to various meteorological conditions, such as the temperature of the earth and air,

the incidence of rainfall, and the rise and fall of ground-water. A commencement in the same direction has been made by the Public Health Committee in Johannesburg, and, with the sanction of that Committee, it is now proposed to construct an apparatus—similar to that devised by Dr. Watkins-Pitchford—for recording the variations of ground-water levels, a matter to which little practical investigation has been directed even in England, though in Germany observations have been long made.

On Friday, June 16th, a very interesting address on Black-water Fever was given by Dr. Fleming, Medical Director, Rhodesia, who has much experience of the disease. This was followed by a paper (by Mr. Watkins-Pitchford, F.R.C.V.S.), of exceptional general and medical interest on the anatomy, habits, and venom of Natal snakes, and also on the production and use of anti-venom. Specimens of the most notable snakes and of their dried poison were shown, and it was stated that, judged from its effects on lower animals, one discharge of the Black Mamba's venom is sufficient to kill eight humans.

On Friday afternoon, the 16th, the Congress visited the Hon. Joseph Baynes' model dairy and creamery at Nels Rust, and through the courtesy of Mr. Alexander, the manager, Dr. Porter obtained the following particulars of their methods:—

The milk and cream are obtained not only from Mr. Baynes' own farm, on which there are a large number of well-housed and well-kept milch cows, but also from farmers for a radius of many miles round. Each of these farmers is supplied on easy terms with a sterilising plant which costs about £15, and can be obtained either from the "Dairy Outfitting Co.," 251 Pentonville Road, King's Cross, or from "The Dairy Supply Co.," Museum Street, London. It consists of a double-jacketed "Verlix" beater, a small paraffin stove, an aerator, and a swing-stand. Under the conditions of sale the farmers undertake to strain their milk, heat it in the steriliser to 180° F., and then cool it down over the aerator, through which river-water flows, to the temperature of river-water. It is then sent to the creamery, where it is weighed, tested for acidity (which must not exceed 0.2 degrees), screened twice, heated again in a large steriliser to 180° F. for 10 minutes, then cooled to about 80° F., by passing over an aerator through which circulates river-water, and further reduced to a temperature of 33° F., by flowing over a brine-cooled cylinder. The milk is then drawn off into steam-sterilised cans of various sizes (all

bottles have been discarded) and kept in a refrigerating chamber till it is placed in a refrigerating railway van for transport to Durban or elsewhere. Everything is scrupulously clean, and one could not but wish that such an institution existed in Johannesburg.

In conclusion, it is to be observed that, apart from the actual work of the Sections, one was privileged to meet and exchange ideas with Health Officers and other medical men from various parts of the colony, which is not the least beneficial and useful of the advantages of such gatherings.

#### ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF EDINBURGH.

At a meeting of the College held on Wednesday, July 26, 1905, the following gentlemen, having passed the requisite examinations, were admitted Fellows:—Lewis Beesly, L.R.C.S.E., Edinburgh; Alexander Brownlee, L.R.C.S.E., Edinburgh; Harold Branson Butler, M.R.C.S. Eng., Guildford; Duncan Macnab Callender, M.B., Ch. B., Edinburgh; Naunidh Rai Dharmavir, L.R.C.S.E., Mexborough; Augustus D'Souza, L.R.C.S.E., Edinburgh; James Ferguson Duncan, M.B., Ch.B., Edinburgh; James Forrest, M.B., Ch. B., Blackpool; Alfred Thomas Gavin, M.B., C.M., Dunaskin; Bharat Chandra Ghosh, L.R.C.S.E., Punjab; Frederick Charles Hitchins, M.R.C.S. Eng., St. Austell, Cornwall; Mathew Holmes, M.B., Ch. B., Edinburgh; Robert James Irving, M.B., C.M., Norwich; Samuel Jesudasan, M.B., C.M., London, N.; John Arnold Jones, M.B., Ch. B., Manchester; Edwin Malcolm Lithgow, M.B., Ch. B., Edinburgh; Samuel Harvey M'Coy, M.R.C.S. Eng., St. Catharines, Ontario; John Stewart Merrillees, L.R.C.S.E., Auburn, Melbourne; John David O'Donnell, L.R.C.S.E., Mysore, India; George Benjamin Pemberton, M.B., Ch. B., Edinburgh; Charles George Webster, L.R.C.S.E., Captain, I.M.S.; and Charles Peterson Weekes, M.R.C.S. Eng., Sutton, Surrey.

The Medal and Set of Books forming the "Bathgate Memorial Prize," presented to the College by Colonel William Lorimer Bathgate, in memory of his late father, William M'Phune Bathgate, Fellow of the College, was awarded to Mr. Peter Gorrie, 3 Cameron Park, Edinburgh.