

disability increased. Speech became difficult, and was limited to single words, which were not easily produced. In June, 1924, he was certified and removed to a mental home, being taken away soon afterwards. In August his wife was appointed receiver of his estate. In January, 1925, he made a will disinheriting his wife and son. The solicitor taking his instructions adopted the unusual but prudent course of causing four medical practitioners to be present at the execution of the will. Two of them witnessed his signature; all four vouched that they were satisfied of his capability. They had heard the will read over to him, they had been encouraged to ask questions, and they had tested his knowledge of what he was doing. A number of local witnesses gave evidence that he was sane, that they always understood what he wished to say, and that he understood them, that he never said or did a foolish thing, that he was a shrewd judge of cattle, and so on.

Lord Merrivale, who tried the case, said that it was not until he had heard the evidence of the wife that he doubted whether the testator had known and approved the conditions of his 1925 will. After hearing the evidence he found himself unable to be certain of the testator's sound disposing mind; the burden of proof rested on the parties propounding the will, and had not been discharged; so he pronounced against the will, finding that the testator, by reason of progressive deterioration of the brain due to arteriosclerosis, was wholly insane and unaccountable for his actions in 1924. "I am satisfied," he said, "that Mr. Christie was suffering from a progressive disease which affected his mental faculties; it deprived him of the means of knowledge, of the scope of knowledge, and of the capability for judgement which were necessary to give him testamentary capacity. With regard to his wife and son, whom the will of 1925 was intended to dispossess, he had an insane delusion that they hated him."

The *Lancet* comments, properly, that a mere mistaken conclusion that his wife and son hated him would not have invalidated the will, but disorder of the mind had poisoned the testator's affection, perverted his sense of right, and prevented the exercise of his rational faculties. A mere capricious, or even malicious, disposition with the object of injuring his wife and son would not of itself have been invalid, but would have been unnatural, and therefore would in any case have brought his capacity under suspicion. His will could not claim, like Mrs. Cartwright's will, the immunity of a rational act rationally done. There was plenty of evidence that Christie's mind was far from sound. When a testator has been at any recent time of unsound mind, the persons who uphold his will have to prove that he had testamentary capacity when he made it; those who oppose the will do not have to prove that he was incapable, for this is presumed. Lord Merrivale would therefore have been justified in finding against the will even if he had not been certain that the testator was actually incapable when it was executed.

Universities and Colleges

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

The Council has appointed Mr. J. S. M. Connell, F.R.C.S.Ed., to be Lecturer in Applied Anatomy (Midwifery and Diseases of Women); Dr. R. E. Jones to be Lecturer in Bacteriology and Assistant Bacteriologist in the Public Health Laboratory, in place of Dr. Baylis Ash; and Dr. Fritz Jacoby, to be Research Assistant in Tissue Culture and Assistant Lecturer in Histology.

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

A graduation ceremony was held on April 20th, when the following degrees, among others, were conferred:

M.D.—*W. R. Snodgrass, †D. Clyde (*in absentia*), ‡W. A. Murray, †M. M. Scott, †W. Tennent, †J. A. Waterman (*in absentia*), J. Leishman, E. W. McCormick, Jean MacI. Mackintosh, A. W. McRorie (*in absentia*), C. D. F. Morton, F. R. Wilson.

M.B., Ch.B.—*A. M. Pugh, *T. Crawford, *R. G. Henderson, †D. H. Wallace, †J. A. C. Knox, †J. B. Brown, R. G. Anderson, S. Y. Baird, B. N. P. Bannatyne, R. S. Barclay, P. McI. Bennett, A. C. Blair, W. M. Boyd, D. Campbell, Elizabeth N. Christie, D. S. Crawford, W. F. Cruickshank, I. McN. Drysdale, J. W. Eidlin, A. W. V. Eley, A. D. Fleming, Maev Gallagher, Mima M.

Gemmell, W. R. Gemmell, H. B. Gillespie, A. Glasser, J. Gordon, J. F. Harper, Phebe N. Harvey, W. Hirshow, A. Iredale, A. C. Jacobsen, D. T. Kemp, A. S. Kitchin, Prince Herbert Chukuwetalu Kodilinye, J. H. Levack, L. Levine, I. Livingstone, J. McAulay, J. McCreadie, R. MacG. McGowan, A. F. McIntyre, J. P. McIntyre, G. N. MacKenzie, A. C. Mayer, K. R. Minto, N. R. Murdoch, A. M. Murray, H. Richmond, M. S. Robertson, W. Sharpe, J. A. Sinclair, S. Slonimsky, J. A. Squair, R. Steinacre, Sarah Stewart, G. Struthers, J. H. Taylor, A. Tracy, J. Travers, E. H. Wallace, Jeanie F. Watson, I. B. L. Weir, D. Wolfson, D. Wright, J. Wyper.

* With honours.

† With high commendation.

‡ With commendation.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF LONDON

At a meeting of the Royal College of Physicians, held on April 15th, Lord Dawson of Penn was re-elected President.

Dr. O. F. F. Leyton and Dr. F. M. R. Walshe were appointed Examiners to the Conjoint Board in Medicine and Ophthalmic Medicine respectively.

Lord Horder was appointed representative of the College on the National Council for the Disposition of the Dead; Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Reginald Bond representative on the Professional Classes Aid Council; and Dr. T. W. Wadsworth delegate to the twenty-first annual conference of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis at Southport, June 27th to 29th.

Diplomas in Ophthalmic Medicine and Surgery were granted, jointly with the Royal College of Surgeons, to the following candidates:

H. L. Anand, E. J. Baldwin, G. D. J. Ball, A. H. Briggs, R. U. Hingorani, V. V. H. Hoakai, Alice B. Laker, T. B. Law, L. A. Lewis, F. M. Lyons, A. Mellick, J. D. Saggar, L. R. Sarin, Captain P. Shannon, I.M.S., E. Wolstein.

CONJOINT BOARD IN SCOTLAND

The following candidates, having passed the requisite examinations, have been admitted L.R.C.P.Ed., L.R.C.S.Ed., L.R.F.P. and S.Glas.

K. R. Minto, H. A. Korn, H. S. Berent, M. Schmuschkowitz, G. G. Macrae, H. A. J. P. Strecker, L. J. W. Wurzbarger, A. E. Martin, H. Abrahamsohn, K. Strauss, R. K. A. van Someren, G. D. W. Adamson, F. Abrahamsohn, Anneliese Schloss, A. Buchan, H. D. B. North, N. Anderman, Balbina Lurje, H. Droller, T. A. B. Mason, G. P. A. A. Nayagam, A. Watt, H. Buxbaum, K. Silverstein, W. O'Callaghan, A. Model, W. Misch, P. T. Weyl, C. V. De Biaso, B. Lux, E. Goldschmidt, E. Flatow, A. M. Geissa, Florizel Westbourne-Aird, E. St. M. Brett, J. C. MacDougall, H. A. Magnus, W. H. Jervis, M. Ismail S. Simon, A. Philipp.

Medical Notes in Parliament

[FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT]

Before adjourning, the House of Commons completed the committee stage of the Budget resolutions.

On the motion for the adjournment Mr. G. Shakespeare, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health, made a reassuring statement concerning the nation's water supplies. Town reservoirs, he said, which this time last year were depleted, were now full. The view of the Water Advisory Committee was that even if we had a dry summer we could face it without apprehension in any quarter of the country. Referring to rural conditions, Mr. Shakespeare said that the Government had allocated £1,000,000 for schemes for rural areas, and already schemes for 1,100 parishes costing £3,200,000 had been approved.

Defence Against Air Attack

On April 16th, Sir JOHN GILMOUR informed the House of Commons that a special Department of the Home Office, under an Assistant Under-Secretary of State, was being formed at No. 5, Princes Street, Westminster, to act as the channel for communicating to local authorities in England and Wales details of the measures necessary for them to take in organizing local services for safeguarding the civil population against the effects of air attack. The new Department would not be fully staffed until the beginning of May, and its first important duty would then be the issue to local authorities of a general circular outlining the Government's policy, and the directions in which their co-

operation would be required. Instructions on precautions to be taken by individual members of the public would follow. It was hoped to give fuller information to the House at a later date.

Inquiries into Local Government Systems

The Prime Minister, on April 17th, announced the appointment of two Royal Commissions to inquire into the local government system on Tyneside and in Merthyr Tydfil. The Tyneside Commission will consist of Sir Sidney Rowlatt (chairman), Sir Angus Scott, and Mr. C. H. Roberts; on the Merthyr Commission will be Sir Arthur Lowry and Mr. J. T. Richards.

Scabies in the Army.—Colonel Sir ARNOLD WILSON, on April 16th, asked if the attention of the Minister of Health had been drawn to a statement made in the Annual Report for 1932 on the Health of the Army that there had been a steady annual increase in scabies, an infectious parasitic disease, due to the fact that the condition was more prevalent than heretofore in the civil population; and whether he would institute inquiries as to the circumstances in which this infection, unlike all others of its kind, was increasing. Sir HILTON YOUNG said he knew the statement referred to, but he was not satisfied that there had been any increase in the prevalence of scabies in the civil population or that there was any need for special inquiries. The Report on the Health of the Army for 1933 stated that the steady annual increase in scabies referred to in the 1932 report appeared to have been checked. A fall of ninety-seven cases, from 765 (4.2 per 1,000) to 668 (3.6 per 1,000), was reported.

Medical Officers in Ceylon.—In reply to Captain Fuller, on April 17th, Sir PHILIP CUNLIFFE-LISTER said the Ceylon Estimates for 1930-1 made provision for 316 medical officers and twenty-seven medical officers of health. Those for 1934-5 made provision for 312 medical officers and twenty-five medical officers of health. These figures excluded, in both cases, staff and specialist appointments. They showed a total reduction of less than 2 per cent. between the earlier and later period.

Death following Fumigation.—On April 17th, Mr. WILL THORNE asked whether the Minister of Health had received a report from the coroner on the death of two children who died after the fumigation of their home at Aldershot; the cause of death; and whether the houses were properly examined before the occupants were allowed to take possession after fumigation. Mr. SHAKESPEARE replied that it was not the duty of the coroner to submit reports on these matters to the Minister of Health, but Sir Hilton Young had received a preliminary report from an officer of his Department who was present at the inquest. To this he was giving immediate consideration in consultation with the Home Office. The verdict was one of death from misadventure by cyanide poisoning. As regards the last part of the question Mr. Shakespeare referred Mr. Thorne to a rider attached by the jury to the verdict.

Cremation Regulations.—Captain ELLISTON asked the Home Secretary, on April 17th, whether he would sanction cremation by local authorities of bodies for the disposal of which they were responsible. Sir JOHN GILMOUR replied that Regulation 5 of the Cremation Regulations prohibited the cremation of human remains which had not been identified, and he could not see his way to amend this provision.

Birmingham Infectious Diseases Hospital.—On April 17th Mr. GROVES asked the Minister of Health how the authorities of the Birmingham City Infectious Diseases Hospital were able to compare the incidence of infectious diseases in their nurses for former years with the incidence for the years 1932 and 1933 if the earlier records were not available; and whether any classified records were available for each of the years 1923 to 1932. Sir HILTON YOUNG said he understood from the local authority that, so far as general illness in nurses at the Birmingham City Infectious Diseases Hospital was concerned, classified records were not available for years earlier than 1932, but that full particulars were available as regards notifiable infectious diseases occurring among the nurses.

Medical News

The annual spring dinner of the Queen's University Club, London, will be held at the Dorchester Hotel, W., on Thursday, May 2nd, at 8 p.m., with the president, Dr. T. Carnwath, in the chair. Further information from the honorary secretaries, 101, Harley Street, W.1.

The University College (late Queen's College), Galway, North of England, and Midlands Alumni Association will hold its ninth annual medical reunion at the Queen's Hotel, Piccadilly, Manchester, on Saturday, May 4th, at 7.30 p.m.; dinner at 8 p.m. The subscription is one guinea, which includes the dinner, cost of organization, printing, etc. All Galway graduates are invited. Those who intend to come are requested to notify the honorary secretary, Dr. P. J. Webb, 127, Rochdale Road, Harpurhey, Manchester, 9.

Dr. C. S. Myers, F.R.S., will deliver a discourse on "The Scientific Approach to Vocational Guidance," at the Royal Institution, 21, Albemarle Street, W., on Friday, May 10th, at 9 p.m. Dr. Angus Macrae will give a demonstration of method as applied to an individual case.

Professor Neymann of Chicago will read a paper on "Treatment of Syphilis of the Central Nervous System" before the Section of Therapeutics and Pharmacology of the Royal Society of Medicine on Tuesday, April 30th, at 5 p.m. At 8.30 p.m. on the same day there will be a special meeting of the Section of Pathology, at which Dr. Claus Jensen of the State Serum Institute, Copenhagen, will read a paper on "The 1934 Epidemic of Poliomyelitis in Denmark: Preliminary Report on the Epidemiology, Clinical Features, and the use of Convalescent Serum."

A course of lectures on pathological research in its relation to medicine will be given at the Institute of Pathology and Research, St. Mary's Hospital, W., on Thursdays at 5 p.m., from May 2nd to June 20th inclusive. The lectures are open to all members of the medical profession and to all students in medical schools, without fee.

A meeting of the medical section of the British Psychological Society will be held at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 36, Gloucester Place, Portman Square, W.1, on Wednesday, May 1st, at 8.30 p.m., when Dr. W. R. Bion will read a paper on "Psychological Asepsis."

A post-graduate course on internal secretions will be held at Bad Kudowa from May 18th to 20th, when lectures will be given by Bastanier, von Bergmann, Munk, Schultz, and Wagner of Berlin, Grote of Dresden, Gutzeit and Parade of Breslau, Kötschau of Jena, and Nonnenbruch of Prague. Further information can be obtained from Badeverwaltung Kudowa, Nachodstr. 8, Berlin, W.50.

A series of post-graduate clinical demonstrations, under the auspices of the University of Durham College of Medicine, will be given at Newcastle General Hospital on Sundays from April 28th to June 23rd (with the exception of Whit Sunday, June 9th).

The Fellowship of Medicine (1, Wimpole Street, W.) announces that a course in dermatology will be given at St. John's Hospital from April 29th to June 2nd, also a course in medicine, surgery, and gynaecology at Royal Waterloo Hospital, from April 29th to May 11th. A week-end course in cardiology (especially suitable for general practitioners) will be given at City of London Hospital, Victoria Park, E., on May 4th and 5th. Other week-end courses include diseases of the chest at Brompton Hospital, May 11th and 12th; obstetrics at City of London Maternity Hospital, May 25th and 26th; fevers at Park Hospital, Hither Green, S.E., June 15th and 16th. Forthcoming courses include thoracic surgery at Brompton Hospital, May 18th to 18th; an M.R.C.P. course at Brompton Hospital during June; an evening M.R.C.P. clinical and pathological course, on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m., at National Temperance Hospital from June 11th to 27th; and an evening M.R.C.P. course in chest and heart diseases

at Victoria Park Hospital, June 5th to 21st. With the exception of the dermatology course at St. John's Hospital, courses arranged by the Fellowship are open only to members and associates.

An International Congress of Roman Catholic Medical Practitioners, organized by the Belgian Medical Society of St. Luke, St. Cosmas, and St. Damien, will be held in Brussels from May 29th to June 4th. Further information can be obtained from the Secretariat, 14, Rue Blanche, Brussels.

The Earl of Malmesbury, chairman of the Hampshire County Council, will preside over the next health congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute, to be held at Bournemouth from July 15th to 20th.

A plaque in memory of Dr. Irene Clarke, whose death was announced in our issue of July 28th, 1934, was unveiled by Lady Frances Smith at the Acton Hospital on April 16th. After the ceremony a cheque for £1,000 was presented to the secretary of the hospital by Dr. Thomas W. Clarke, M.C. (husband of Dr. Irene Clarke), on behalf of Mrs. Higgin (Dr. Clarke's mother) and himself, towards the hospital extension. The donation was made for the special purpose of improving the accommodation for children, in whose welfare Dr. Irene Clarke was particularly interested.

Owing to illness Dr. Alfred Adler will be unable to deliver the three public lectures at the Conway Hall on April 29th, May 1st and 3rd.

On May 2nd, at 2.30 p.m., a demonstration of the use of a variety of contraceptive methods will be given at 106, Whitfield Street, Tottenham Court Road, W. Previous application for tickets (which will be supplied to medical practitioners and senior students only) should be made in writing to the honorary secretary, C.B.C., at the address given above.

The House Committee of the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne, has provisionally allocated one and a half acres of ground at the north-west corner of the Infirmary site for the contemplated erection of a new maternity hospital, to replace the present Princess Mary's. Radical improvements to the Princess Mary buildings are well known to be necessary, and various health authorities have decided that, from the point of view both of convenience and of healthiness of site, it is desirable to move it completely to Queen Victoria Road.

The issue of *Bulletin Médical* for March 30th is devoted to arterial hypertension.

The organizers of the Birmingham hospitals centre, of which the Prince of Wales laid the foundation stone last October, have issued a further list of contributions, making a total of £740,000 towards the £1,000,000 needed for the first and largest part of the scheme.

The treasurers of St. George's Hospital have received a gift of £10,000, spread over seven years, towards the rebuilding and endowment fund for the new hospital at Hyde Park Corner on condition that the name of the donor shall remain anonymous.

After allowing for legacies, and subject to life interests, the residue of the property of the late Mr. R. M. Roe of Brockley, S.E., who left net personalty of £18,473, goes to Guy's Hospital, to be called the Sir Alfred Fripp Trust, in memory of the late Sir Alfred Fripp.

Geh. Med.-Rat. Dr. Ferdinand Graf von Spee, formerly professor of physiological anatomy and embryology at Kiel, celebrated his eightieth birthday on April 5th.

Colonel Thomas Fraser, C.B.E., D.S.O., T.D., M.B., Ch.B., has been appointed a deputy lieutenant for the county of the city of Aberdeen.

The corrected statistics of notifiable diseases throughout the world for the year 1932 have recently been published by the Health Section of the League of Nations. The volume also contains a detailed list of the notifiable diseases in various countries.

Dr. L. Dekeyser has been elected president of the Association of the Belgian Medical Press for 1935.

Letters, Notes, and Answers

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **The EDITOR, British Medical Journal, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

ORIGINAL ARTICLES and LETTERS forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the *British Medical Journal* alone unless the contrary be stated. Correspondents who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names, not necessarily for publication.

Authors desiring REPRINTS of their articles published in the *British Medical Journal* must communicate with the Financial Secretary and Business Manager, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, on receipt of proofs. Authors 'over-seas' should indicate on MSS. if reprints are required, as proofs are not sent abroad.

All communications with reference to ADVERTISEMENTS, as well as orders for copies of the *Journal*, should be addressed to the Financial Secretary and Business Manager.

The TELEPHONE NUMBER of the British Medical Association and the *British Medical Journal* is EUSTON 2111 (internal exchange, four lines).

The TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES are:

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FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND BUSINESS MANAGER (Advertisements, etc.), *Articulate Westcent, London.*

MEDICAL SECRETARY, *Medisecra Westcent, London.*

The address of the Irish Office of the British Medical Association is 18, Kildare Street, Dublin (telegrams: *Bacillus, Dublin*; telephone: 62550 Dublin), and of the Scottish Office, 7, Drumshough Gardens, Edinburgh (telegrams: *Associate, Edinburgh*; telephone: 24361 Edinburgh).

QUERIES AND ANSWERS

Cracked Upper Lip

"B. G." writes: I should be grateful for suggestions as to treatment for a crack in the median line of the mucous membrane of the upper lip, just opposite the alveolar margin. This has persisted for a year. It has been treated with silver nitrate, copper sulphate, ung. hydrarg. nit. dil., and simple ointments, and the upper vulcanite denture has been altered but, though it occasionally seems to heal, it always opens up again in a few days. There does not appear to be anything malignant about it.

Unilateral Spasms in the Newly Born

"D." asks for suggestions with regard to the following case. A healthy young primipara delivered herself, after normal labour of six hours' duration, of a child which was perfectly normal and weighed eight and a half pounds. Twelve hours later the child developed clonic spasms of the left side of the face, the left arm, and the left leg. These spasms continued for three days, and then ceased suddenly. The only other signs present were an uncountable pulse and pin-point pupil of the left eye. The grandmother stated that eleven of her fifteen children showed exactly the same symptoms, and nine of them died. She further stated that in her husband's family this condition had been seen, and was thought to have come from his mother, who suffered from epileptic fits. As "D." is unable to find any reference to this condition in literature, he invites the comments of neurologists on this case.

Income Tax

Cash Basis—Bad Debts

"E. S." inquires whether it is a fact that under the cash basis system no allowance is made for bad debts?

** No special deduction is made for bad debts, but that is because the allowance is automatic. As only amounts actually received are included in the gross income of the practice it follows that the net profits, after deduction of the expenses, do not need to be further reduced by any estimate for "bad debts"—in fact, the exclusion of that difficult question is the main advantage of the "cash basis."

Cost of Travelling

"S. H.," who holds a hospital appointment, acted also temporarily for a colleague at another hospital. The cost of travelling between the hospitals has been disallowed on the ground that it was not incurred in carrying out the duty of either appointment.

** The refusal is founded on judicial decisions and is good in law, though harsh in its application to "S. H."