

OBITUARY NOTICES.

W. H. GARNER.

This old and respected member of our Association died on February 12th, 1904. He was born at Downpatrick seventy-four years ago. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and took the degree of B.A. in the University of Dublin in 1853. He also held the Licence of the Edinburgh College of Physicians and the Fellowship of the Irish College of Surgeons. In his early professional career he practised for a while in the Lowlands of Scotland. He held among other appointments that of Surgeon to the "Scottish Borderers" Militia. In this capacity, though he never saw what the "combatants" call "active service," he had an experience of which to the last he was justly proud. Smallpox broke out among his corps, and he had no less than seventy sufferers from that disease under canvas in his care, and did not lose one—a result which was very remarkable at that time when unmodified smallpox was so much more common than now, and which would be very creditable even in modern days of re-vaccination and antiseptics.

In 1868 he was appointed Resident Medical Superintendent of the Auxiliary Asylum, which had been erected close to, but not in immediate connection with, the Clonmel Asylum. Experience soon showed him the impossibility of doing justice to the insane in a cheaply run auxiliary asylum and the positive cruelty of dooming patients to neglect by labelling them "incurable." In this spirit he wrote an article on Auxiliary Asylums, which attracted a good deal of attention at the time and was of much service to the cause he had at heart. On the death of Dr. Flynn, in 1870, Dr. Garner was promoted to the Medical Superintendency of the parent asylum. By obtaining the purchase of the lands lying between the two buildings and having a tunnel made there through under roads, etc., he connected the asylums topographically and worked them from a common centre. This condition has continued and worked well and economically as he foretold. In a little while he divided the buildings by the sexes of their occupants, placing in what had been the "auxiliary" male patients of all classes, instead of "incurable" patients of both sexes, and reserving the older asylum solely for women. At the present time it is interesting to recall the termination of the first Irish experiment in auxiliary asylums. Dr. Garner was ever most earnest in endeavours to improve the condition of the insane and prominent in all forward movements in our specialty. His asylum stood very high among the institutions of his country. He earned the warmest affection and respect from his official colleagues. Among the members of our specialty in Ireland he enjoyed the highest character as a physician and as a gentleman. He gave up active work in 1900, retiring on a pension after nearly thirty-two years' service. The remainder of his life he spent near Dublin. He was a man who joined in a remarkable way the two finest qualities of a gentleman, kindly courtesy and undaunted courage. The former endeared him to his associates, the latter supported him in the difficulties of his official career, and did not fail him in the last extremity of Nature. "I would fight the monarch on the throne if it were my duty," he often said, nor did he blench before another monarch. His medical advisers told him that the abdominal trouble (rectal tumour) from which he suffered would kill him unless he underwent an operation which his age and general condition would render highly risky. One of his friends, communicating to another the circumstances of his death, writes: "He was a brave old man. I was at a big 'at home' at his house just eight days before his death. He received his guests, joked, and talked with them, and was apparently in the best spirits. He then told me aside that he was 'sentenced to death.' I saw him again when he was in hospital, and he was as cool and placid as ever I have seen him."

Dr. Garner was twice married. Six children survive him, of whom one is a Major in the Royal Army Medical Corps, and holds high position in the Egyptian Public Health Department, where he is assisted by his brother, who is a civil surgeon in the same department.