

by the Sessions or Assizes, they may be retained. On the whole scheme there has been an apparent desire to save something between £100 and £200 a year, to demand infinitely more exacting duties, and to do it all at the expense of the medical profession. We are glad that the Division has taken up the matter so energetically, and has been so well supported by the rank and file of the profession. The general conclusion arrived at was that a retaining fee was necessary for the Police Surgeonship; but that all fees for street accidents, certificates and all other duties, except the attendance on constables, should be paid for as extras. It was felt that on several points more knowledge was required of the duties involved; that "appliances" should not be provided by the surgeons with "medicines," and that the Watch Committee, not the Chief Constable, should approve a *locum tenens* to do the work when the surgeon was away from home, and also that the diary with the record of duties performed should be submitted direct to the Committee and not through the Chief Constable. Some minor suggestions were also adopted. The meeting was pleased to hear that the Chairman of the Watch Committee was willing to receive a deputation from the profession in connexion with the matter. The deputation was appointed, and we have no doubt will be able to convince the Watch Committee of the reasonableness of the attitude adopted by the medical profession in the matter.

## North Staffordshire.

### MOND GAS AND POTTERS' OVENS.

THE success of certain experiments in the application of Mond gas to firing potters' ovens, which have been undertaken by Mr. T. W. Twyford, promises to do a great deal for the health of the towns of North Staffordshire. The general use of this fuel would largely decrease the smoke element which is at present a necessary accompaniment of good trade in the Potteries. The experiments have now overcome the difficulties of increasing the normal calorific value of the gas so that a temperature of 1,350° C. is procurable in the ovens, of diffusing the temperature properly, and of placing the gas under full control. The cost of this method of firing is less than that of coal firing and the cost of installation and adaptation of existing ovens is small, while the saving in wear and tear, and the avoidance of loss by reason of greater regularity of firing will be enormous. The system therefore is both cleanly and economical.

## Bristol.

### LUNATIC ASYLUM.

THE report of the Visiting Committee of the Council of the Lunatic Asylum for the City and County of Bristol shows that on December 31st there were 923 patients in the institution. This number is slightly smaller than that of a year before, and was made up of 422 males and 501 females. Not all of these are chargeable to the city, for there were 17 private patients, 20 from Cardiff, 3 from out-county unions, and 3 criminals. The Committee reports that it has experienced great difficulty in satisfying the Commissioner on the extension plans, though these have been passed not for 45 beds as intended but for 90, which will relieve the overcrowding on the male side. The report of the medical officer follows, giving details of the admissions, but perhaps the most interesting figures are those showing the percentage of recoveries. During the past year it was 41.85, a slightly higher figure than last year, though not quite the highest recorded. The report of the Visiting Commissioners in Lunacy calls attention to the overcrowding on the male side by 11 patients, with vacancies on the female side of 52 beds. The condition of the patients is favourably commented on, and while facilities were given to all inmates of speaking to the visitors, no complaints worth mentioning were made. The meals were inspected and approved of—the report does not say they were practically tested. The asylum is reported to be well maintained throughout, and the suggestions of previous visitors on the ventilation stated to have been carried out. The chaplain reports on the spiritual welfare of the

inmates, stating their attendance to be good and behaviour exemplary, but deplors the destructive propensities of the patients as regards books, and particularly the bound magazines from the library.

## South Wales.

### M.O.H. AND J.P.

At the Aberavon County Police Court (on June 3rd) a rather curious point was raised in the course of a case against a butcher summoned by the Margam District Council for selling a quantity of liver unfit for human food. The liver was taken to the police, and the medical officer who condemned it ordered it to be destroyed. Proof was given of the adoption of the Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1890, by the Council. For the defence it was submitted that there was no case to answer, as the proceedings were improper and not in accordance with the Act. In this case Dr. Davies had acted as medical officer and justice of the peace, which, it was submitted, was highly improper, as the Act definitely referred to two separate persons. The meat had been taken to Dr. Davies as medical officer of health to decide whether it was fit for human food or not, and, in addition, he had ordered it to be destroyed. It was argued that after Dr. Davies had once acted as medical officer he had no right to act as a justice of the peace. It was shown on behalf of the Council that personal knowledge of the offence was unnecessary, and that there was no law to prohibit a medical officer and justice of the peace acting in the two capacities. The magistrates, after a retirement, ruled against the points submitted, and found defendant guilty of the charge. A fine of £3 and £7 costs was imposed.

### WELSH MUSEUM.

The Merionethshire County Council, on June 5th, appointed Dr. William Williams (Penarth), Medical Officer of Health to the Glamorgan County Council, a native of Merioneth, as Representative of that county on the Court of Governors of the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff.

### MIDWIVES IN GLAMORGAN.

The Executive Officer has reported to the Midwives Act Executive Subcommittee of the Glamorgan County Council that the number of midwives who had notified him their intention to practise in the county during 1907 was 634; of these, 595 had been certified by the Central Midwives Board on account of having been in bona-fide practice since July, 1901; the remaining 39 held certificates of training in midwifery. The work of inspection had been continued by Nurse M. Evans, L.O.S., 266 visits having been made during the quarter. Nine cases of puerperal fever were voluntarily notified by the medical practitioners in the county, and these were investigated. No midwives were suspended except for disinfecting purposes. Reference was made to the new rules issued by the Central Midwives Board, which came into operation on May 1st. A letter was sent to each of the midwives practising within the county calling their attention to the new rules and advising them to obtain a copy without delay.

### MEDICAL AID AND SELF-HELP.

For nearly a quarter of a century the Cardiff Provident Dispensary has carried on its excellent work in Guildford Street. The work has gone on quietly, and hence is little known except to the beneficiary subscribers and the few others who have the institution's affairs at heart and take part in the management. The Chairman of the Committee of Management has issued an appeal for subscribers, who on payment of an annual subscription of not less than 5s. become Governors. The appeal sets forth that the provident dispensary is the only institution in the city which provides medical aid for the thrifty poor on the basis of self-help. Some 5,000 people are every year enabled, by small weekly payments, to secure efficient medical attendance in sickness, together with proper medicines. By this means the stigma of pauperism is avoided on the one hand, while on the other there is a considerable saving to the overburdened ratepayers, and the infirmity is relieved of much work which would otherwise fall upon it. About 85 per cent. of the expense of the institution is defrayed out of the contributions of the