

attitude of members of the profession who take the position of waiting for working members to take the chestnuts out of the fire. The net result of the work of the County of Durham Medical Union would seem to be a membership of 200 out of a possible membership of 430, but it has done much to encourage a healthy self-reliance. Where their efforts have been least successful the medical men say that their pay is at least not less than it was when the contest began, and that with an equal income they have only two-thirds of the work and two-thirds of the former outlay. Everywhere the miners have been pretty plainly informed that the old sweating terms will no longer be passively tolerated, and if anything like unanimity in the profession could be got there is little doubt that the men would voluntarily concede the just demands of the medical practitioners. Dr. Jepson, Dr. Cox, and the others who have worked together in this matter are to be congratulated on the success that has been attained, and it is to be hoped that their example will be copied in other parts of the country.

MEDICAL AID OFFICERS AND THEIR GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

A HOSPITAL SURGEON writes: A great deal has been written about the conduct of those members of the profession who allow their services to be exploited by medical aid associations, and who, by affiliating themselves with such bodies, countenance their irregular proceedings, and thereby degrade our noble calling. Although I have always regarded their conduct as reprehensible, I could not deny their argument "that if they resigned their appointments there were many other men ready to apply for them." To day no such excuse can be put forward. The profession has been so much depleted, first, by the disappearance of unqualified assistants; and, secondly, by the demands of the war, that there is the greatest difficulty in securing the services of a qualified man. Hospital appointments (which were previously keenly competed for) find no applicants, assistants are almost impossible to procure, and *locum tenens* are only to be obtained at increased fees by few of those requiring them. Now, then, is "the golden opportunity" for these gentlemen to escape from their oppressors and put themselves on a proper footing in their profession. Let them meet together (there cannot be more than fifty of them) and resign in a body. Their associations would not be able to obtain any qualified men, and they would collapse. The officers who resigned could start practice, and would secure most of the club members as their patients. Some think there would be a difficulty about a bond they have signed, but I doubt the legality of such a document. At any rate, the question could be fought without fear of loss because these gentlemen are said to have no means, and, therefore, no damages could be obtained from them. If the law decided against them they could easily change towns, so that the officer of one town would start practice in another where he was not subject to any legal disqualification.

I believe the profession would support such an action. They ought to do so, and I would go so far as to propose that an income equal to that which they at present receive from their association should be guaranteed to them by their professional brethren in the locality for a term of, say, three years. It is probable they would not be asked for much, as the private practice would be more lucrative than the miserable salaries paid by these associations. It is for the medical officers themselves to take action. If they refuse an opportunity which may never occur again, it will be no use pleading in the future that they were not made aware of it.

CONSULTATIONS.

ENQUIRER asks the following question: Dr. A. is the surgeon to a friendly society, one of the members of which (who is entitled to his services) is being attended by a Dr. B. Dr. A. is asked to meet Dr. B. several times in consultation about this member. Can he claim fees as a consultant?

. Although Dr. A. would be within his rights if he declined to meet Dr. B. under such circumstances in consultation about one of his club members, he cannot claim any fee for so meeting Dr. B., as the member is entitled to his professional services under the club contract.

LITERARY NOTES.

THE most recent addition to the long list of French medical journals is one somewhat out of the ordinary line. It is entitled *Paris-Théâtre Médical*, and is to be a monthly review which is intended to be the organ of the friendly society of the Société Amicale des Médecins de Théâtre in Paris. The editor is Dr. Droubaix.

The portion of the library of the late Mr. Henry Jones, M.R.C.S.—better known to whist players by the name of "Cavendish"—which Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge will sell on May 22nd, is, as might be expected, almost solely made up of treatises on card games, notably whist. Several are of considerable rarity and of early date. One of the rarest is the scarce spurious first edition of Hoyle's *Treatise on Whist*, 1743; of the genuine first edition it is said that only one copy—the Bodleian—is known to exist. There is also a copy of H. Neville's *Shuffling, Cutting and Dealing in a Game at Piquet*, 1659, which was reprinted in the fifth volume of the *Harleian Miscellany*.

MEDICAL NOTES IN PARLIAMENT.

[FROM OUR LOBBY CORRESPONDENTS.]

The **Midwives Expenses Resolution** was on Monday the cause of the heartiest laugh the House has enjoyed for a long time. Mr. Balfour, in order to answer questions as to the business to be taken during the sitting, proceeded to go through the orders on the paper, and, on coming to the words "midwives expenses," said, after a moment's hesitation, "I know nothing about them." The House at once took the point, and enjoyed itself in a long and hearty laugh over the disclaimer of the bachelor Leader of the House, who joined heartily himself in the general merriment. Later on, when the order was reached, Sir Walter Foster objected to the resolution being considered, and it stood over. It is felt that the resolution for these expenses should wait until the General Medical Council has met. It may be that considering the changes in the Bill made in Committee, and the fact that the amendments suggested by the General Medical Council have not been wholly adopted, the Council may not be willing to undertake the duties for which the expenses are to be provided.

The **Edinburgh Lunacy Board Bill** was read a second time at the time of private business last week after some serious show of opposition. The Board, in order to provide for the lunatics under their care, have purchased an estate 14 miles from Edinburgh on which an asylum to cost about a quarter-of-a-million is to be erected. This was within their statutory powers, but in addition it is proposed to construct a railway 1½ mile in length for goods and passengers, and further to take 1,500 acres of land as a catchment area for the water supply. These additional powers were objected to on the ground that the Lunacy Board ought not to become a water company and a railway company and the proprietors of a sewage farm. The Bill was eventually allowed a second reading on the understanding that it should be referred to a Select Committee to consider the difficulties and novelties of the proposals.

Luolifer Match Factories.—The new special rules regulating the employment of persons in factories where white or yellow phosphorus is used were discussed in the House after midnight on Monday. The main complaint was directed against leaving the chief responsibility on the dental surgeon after the persons were pronounced fit for the work, and relying on his inspection of the teeth every three months without having a medical examination of the general health as well. It was contended that phossy-jaw was not the only injury to be dreaded and that the absence of regular medical examination might be hurtful. The Home Secretary showed that he had been guided by expert advice, and expressed a strong hope that the new methods of manufacture by abolishing the use of yellow or white phosphorus altogether would render the trade much more healthy. The motion to annul the rules was rejected by 98 votes to 37.

The **New National Physical Laboratory** is not to be erected after all in the Queen's Cottage grounds, or indeed in any other grounds attached to Kew Gardens. It will stand quite outside these gardens on Crown land, under the jurisdiction of the Office of Works. The First Commissioner of Works stated that the buildings will not interfere with the view from the Gardens over the Old Deer Park, and as the laboratory will be only used for delicate scientific work requiring quiet, it will not disturb the seclusion of the Queen's Cottage.

Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities sent up their new member, Sir John Batty Tuke, to take his seat on Tuesday last. He was introduced by the Right Hon. J. A. Campbell (Glasgow University) and Sir Michael Foster (London University) and was greeted with a cheer from his friends. It was unfortunate that the new member was kept waiting nearly three hours before he could take his seat in consequence of prolonged discussions on private business and privilege.