

it is impossible for the parents continuously to provide for their children. It has been suggested that a minimum wage of 25s. per week for an unskilled labourer should be provided. The proposal is impracticable, and it is not certain that if it were practicable the result would not be to lead to increased waste.

4. If, however, children during school life were adequately fed so that they could profitably receive instruction, and if that instruction were such as to educate them, as far as practicable, so as to make them fit for skilled work, wages would be more equalized, and a higher standard of living would result.

5. There are at present various sources of enormous waste going on, of which two stand out very clearly: (a) Drink. If the amount of alcohol consumed in this country could be diverted to the feeding of children it would maintain 20,000,000 in food, and if reckoned only as beer and spirits it would maintain 11,000,000, at a charge of 6d. per day, which would be an ample allowance. It may be said broadly, therefore, that the amount of alcohol consumed is the chief cause of deficiency of food for the young. The remedy is bound to be slow and a long process of education is required. (b) But a great waste also occurs from want of knowledge on the part of mothers of how economically to select, buy, and prepare food. This knowledge should be imparted in the schools. In association with this is the waste due to want of knowledge of the elementary principles of health in relation to breathing, clothing, exercise, cleanliness, and so forth.

6. The education authority possesses machinery which, when improved and extended, will enable it to detect illness and innutrition amongst children, and to apply remedies.

7. Teachers should be trained to look after the physical conditions as well as after the mental instruction of their scholars, and that training should be practical.

8. Legislation is required enabling the educational authority to enforce the provision of sufficient food and the maintenance of cleanliness in school children by parents.

9. The educational authority should also be empowered to obtain from the rates sufficient provision for the free feeding of children under certain definite conditions. In all schools kitchens should be provided for instruction in the elements of cooking.

10. In all schools children should be weighed and their height measured once a term, and a record should be kept of the age, height, and weight. By this means it would be possible to gauge the condition of the children, both collectively and individually. These observations might usefully be made more frequently in cases where a deficiency of nutriment or disease was suspected.

11. A prolonged and practical course of domestic economy and hygiene should be compulsory for girls. It should include cooking, construction and criticism of diets, management and feeding of infants, methods of cleanliness, sewing, mending, and washing. I am fully aware of the excellent work which has been done by the education authority in their evening continuation classes, and which is already bearing fruit; but, in my opinion, such instruction should be a necessary part of education.

12. The poorer population generally should be instructed as to the diet requisite and the means by which it may be most cheaply obtained.

The lecture has been published under the title of *Food and Drink in Relation to Disease, Feeding in Relation to the Health of the Young*. (Sherratt and Hughes, London and Manchester). Price 1s. 6d. We strongly commend it to the notice of all those interested in the welfare of the children of the labouring classes.

CONTRACT MEDICAL PRACTICE.

RATES FOR MIXED CLUB.

A CORRESPONDENT inquires what would be a reasonable charge per annum for the members of a large club, where the wives and two children were included, confinements being excluded, and the area for visiting was the whole of a large city.

* * * Where women and children are taken, the data on which to base a calculation are insufficient. Under the circumstances a rate of 12s. per annum might be tried, but it is questionable whether our correspondent would find the work remunerative.

MEDICAL DEFENCE.

LONDON AND COUNTIES MEDICAL PROTECTION SOCIETY.

The annual general meeting of the London and Counties Medical Protection Society was held at 31, Craven Street, Strand, on March 11th, when the chair was taken by the PRESIDENT (Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson).

Dr. G. A. HERON, Treasurer and Chairman of the Council, in moving the adoption of the report of the Council, gave a short account of the successful work that had been carried through by the Society during the past year, and in explaining the increase in the accounts for legal expenses, took the opportunity of thanking the Solicitors of the Society, Messrs. Le Brasseur and Oakley, for the manner in which they had assisted the efforts of the Council.

After being duly seconded, the resolution for the adoption of the report was carried unanimously.

In reply to a request for information about the new scheme for Medical Defence put forward by the British Medical Association, Dr. HERON said that the Council of the British Medical Association had received a strong expression of opinion from its Branches asking the Association to take up medical defence. For some time that request was not dealt with; but it was put forward again and again by various members of the Association at the general meeting. As an outcome of that agitation, the Council of the British Medical Association appointed a Committee to consider the matter and suggest, if possible, a reasonable scheme by means of which this question of medical defence might be laid before the members of the Association, so that their opinion might be taken upon the matter. The scheme suggested by the Committee was now being sent out to the various Divisions of the Association for the consideration of the members. The scheme might be altered or it might be rejected, and until the Council of the British Medical Association received an explicit answer to the questions submitted to the members of the Association, the subject of medical defence would remain, so far as the action of the Association was concerned, in abeyance. The Council of the British Medical Association had not expressed any opinion on the matter. It had simply consented to the Divisions of the Association being asked if they did or did not approve of the scheme of medical defence submitted to them. Dr. Heron considered that for the London and Counties Medical Protection Society to discuss a scheme which was under the consideration of the Divisions of the British Medical Association, would be premature, because it was not known in what shape the scheme would be returned by the Divisions. It had further to be remembered that after the Council of the British Medical Association had received the answers from the Divisions the matter must go before the Representative Meeting of the Association at Oxford.

By special request of the CHAIRMAN, Mr. ANDREW CLARK, Chairman of Council of the British Medical Association, then made a few remarks on the subject. He said that, though he had accepted the post of Chairman of the Medical Defence Committee of the Association, he would like it to be clearly understood by the London and Counties Medical Protection Society and by the Medical Defence Union that his taking up that office was not with the slightest idea that the Council of the British Medical Association wished to force medical defence on its members. Many members of the Council thought that to take up medical defence would be injudicious, and he was for some time amongst them, the idea, indeed, was thought to be impracticable. Owing, however, to the exertions of Sir Victor Horsley, Dr. Heron, and others, the conclusion had been arrived at that it was possible for the Association to undertake medical defence without running any risk to its funds, and he believed that the proposed scheme of medical defence was workable, and could be carried out if the members wished it. He with many others desired to see one strong Medical Defence Society, and regretted that the two existing societies had not succeeded in effecting an amalgamation; he would be sorry to see the British Medical Association making a third, but he was not without hope that though at the present time, as evidenced by the memorandum recently issued by the Council of the Medical Defence Union, that body did not look with favour on the British Medical Association's scheme, it would, in the event of the Divisions expressing a desire for the Association to take defence up, change its present opinion. As for the London and Counties, he did not think that they need discuss the matter until the decision of the Association had been arrived at. In one sense he would be sorry to see two