

the College, and for establishing the rights of the Members, which have for so many years been denied them. Those who convened this meeting of the Fellows and Members have been threatened with the penalties contained in By-law 18, which enables the Council to degrade and ruin any who may have taken part in summoning a meeting of one's fellow Members for the purpose of discussing matters seriously affecting their interests.

The Association of Members has now taken definite action in the matter, and injunctions have been served upon the various members of the Council, restraining them from closing their doors against the Fellows and Members, and for prohibiting them from enforcing the penalties of By-law 18, which, it is alleged on behalf of the Members, is invalid, and also from their using the College funds in defending this action.

To sustain the legal action which the Members have now taken, counsel have been instructed, and large expenses incurred. We look to the general body of the Members to support the Association, and those who have shown their willingness to risk so much on behalf of their professional brethren, and we ask for both moral and pecuniary assistance, as the necessary expenses incurred by the legal and parliamentary proceedings which have been taken can only be met by very substantial donations, which should be sent to the Honorary Secretary, Deputy Surgeon-General C. M. Jessop, 98, Sutherland Avenue, London, W.—We are, etc.,

March 6th.

WARWICK C. STEELE, } Hon. Secs.  
W. ASHTON ELLIS, } Assoc. M.R.C.S.

#### PROPOSED DENTAL SECTION.

SIR,—I think Mr. Ackland's suggestion, published in the impression of the JOURNAL of February 23rd, that a Dental Section should be added to the other special sections at our annual meetings, deserves the prompt attention of the Council of the British Medical Association, in order that dental surgery may be represented at the next annual meeting.

At the International Medical Congress, held at Washington in 1887, the Dental Section was generally admitted to have been the best represented section at the meeting, and I feel sure there are, or will be when it is known there is such a section, a sufficient number of members of the British Medical Association practising dental surgery to make it equally successful at our annual general meetings.—I am, etc.,

CHARLES GAINE.

Bath.

SIR,—Mr. Ackland's remarks in your issue of February 23rd *re* a Dental Section of the British Medical Association are not novel, and only serve to open up the whole question of dental qualifications. Although a medical qualification no more educates a man and makes him a dentist than a dental diploma makes a surgeon, still it is very encouraging to see the growing tendency to a closer and actual union of all branches of the healing professions; and when a dental diploma is only granted to a man after a curriculum in no way less complete, although modified to his special requirements, than is demanded of a general practitioner, and has passed the same preliminary and intermediate examinations and a special final, then a Dental Section of the British Medical Association will not only be feasible but heartily welcomed by the Association. Of dental practitioners in Great Britain, less than 100 have other than dental qualifications (of which sixty reside in London), and only about twenty-five are members of the British Medical Association.

The bulk of the dental profession, although including in its number men of the highest attainments and standing, are all ineligible as members of the British Medical Association; but with courage, and a charity (which sets a good example to many of us who, having had the advantage of obtaining a double qualification, are inclined to consider ourselves superior to our less fortunate brethren) towards all men, conducting themselves honourably and professionally, have formed the British Dental Association, which is doing a great and good work for the present generation, but will eventually merge itself into the British Medical or some other Association having a broad interest in each and all the sciences having relation to man's wellbeing.—I am, etc.,

Dewsbury, February 26th.

WILLIAM ED. MARGETSON.

SIR,—Mr. Ackland writes to ask for an expression of opinion in your columns on the suggestion to found a Dental Section of the British Medical Association. I fully sympathise with the object of his wish, but would point out difficulties that at present exist.

Under the rules of the British Medical Association only a small percentage of dental surgeons are qualified for membership. The condition of the dental profession is as follows. There are about five thousand registered dental surgeons in the United Kingdom, less than one thousand of whom have any qualification whatever. Of this one thousand, considerably less than five hundred possess the English qualification (L.D.S.E.). The number of men who have obtained the English dental diploma since the passing of the Dental Act, more than ten years ago, does not exceed an average of twenty-four per annum, and only a limited proportion of these have also taken a registrable medical qualification.

On the other hand, a "British Dental Association" does exist, open to all respectable members of the dental profession. Annual general meetings are held in August, and there are numerous branches. The formation of a Dental Section of the British Medical Association would probably draw away the men with higher qualifications from active membership of the Dental Association, and to this extent would be undesirable. Those who would facilitate the reception of dental surgery among the other specialities of medicine must press for the reform in dental education indicated in a recent editorial article of the JOURNAL, whereby all dental students would have to pass the first and second professional examinations for the M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. At a general hospital the dental student will now be able to obtain the whole of his professional education, and these combined influences would doubtless increase the number of dentists with medical qualifications. The time is not far distant when dental surgery will be taught and practised like any other speciality of medicine, and the establishment of a Dental Section of the British Medical Association will follow as a matter of course.—I am, etc.,

Devonshire Place.

F. NEWLAND-PEDLEY, F.R.C.S.

SIR,—I fully concur in the remarks of your correspondents, Mr. Ackland and Mr. Huxley, as to the advisability of forming a Dental Section of the British Medical Association, and trust the matter will receive the attention it deserves at the hands of the Council at an early date.—I am, etc.,

J. H. CRAIGIE.

London, March 4th.

#### MR. HAMAR BASS, M.P., AND THE ASSOCIATION'S REPORT ON HABITS OF INTEMPERANCE.

SIR,—At a recent banquet of the Bristol Licensed Victuallers Mr. Hamar Bass said that, from statistics of the above report, "it appeared that the rate of mortality of abstainers was greater than that of the habitually intemperate." I contributed some of the data, and was present at the discussion of the report at the Dublin meeting; I know, therefore, the general conclusions to be drawn from the whole, and that they were quite the reverse of those which Mr. Bass, to my astonishment, stated them to be.

I wish to remind some of my fellow associates, who did not carefully study the report, that it was restricted to the three years previous to 1885, and to males who died over 25 years of age. Of the total number of deaths returned—4,234 of all classes—only 122 were those of abstainers, a very slender basis for Mr. Bass's assertion; besides, the report gives the average age at death, which is rather a different thing from the "rate of mortality," as he states. He omits to quote the following words of the report: "It will not be disputed that abstinence principles, which have played so prominent a part of late years, have made many more converts among the young than among the middle-aged or elderly. The temperance movement is hardly fifty years old; total abstinence has made great progress only within the last fifteen years; hence the earlier Bands of Hope have not yet attained to the age to influence the statistics of the report, as none dying under 25 are recorded; therefore the average age of living abstainers, during the three years covered by the report, was much less than the average age of the rest of the community; there is, therefore, a greater average of individuals susceptible to early death (apart from the question of alcohol) than in any of the other classes." Table 12 of the report shows that the stress of the mortality of abstainers comes quite in the early years, before 30.

Mr. Bass has not quoted a table alluded to in the report—that of Dr. Ogle, of the Registrar-General's Office, a return for the years 1880-82, showing that clergymen lived, on an average, three times longer than licensed victuallers, and four times longer than inn and hotel servants. This report also gives Mr. Bowser's conclusions in the *Insurance Leader*: "In the ordinary section of life assurers the deaths from heart affections are three times those of the abstaining section; of deaths from diseases of the stomach,