

THE INSURANCE SCHEME.

STATE SICKNESS INSURANCE COMMITTEE.

Seventh Meeting.

THE seventh meeting of the State Sickness Insurance Committee was held on April 25th.

Mr. T. JENNER VERRALL was in the chair, and the members present were: *England and Wales*: Dr. R. M. Beaton (London), Dr. John Brown (Bacup), Mr. E. J. Domyville (as Chairman of the Public Health Committee), Dr. S. Hodgson (Salford), Miss M. H. Frances Ivens, M.S. (Liverpool), Dr. Constance E. Long (London), Mr. James Neal (Birmingham), Dr. H. F. Oldham (Morecambe), Dr. James Pearse (Trowbridge), Dr. E. C. Price (Bangor), Dr. Lauriston E. Shaw (London), Dr. D. F. Todd (Sunderland), Mr. E. B. Turner (London), Dr. A. H. Williams (Harrow on the Hill), Mr. E. H. Willock (Croydon). *Scotland*: Dr. J. Adams (Glasgow), Dr. Bruce Goff (Bothwell), Dr. J. Munro Moir (Inverness). *Ex Officio*: Dr. E. J. Maclean, Chairman of Representative Meetings; Dr. J. A. Macdonald, Chairman of Council.

Apologies for absence for unavoidable reasons were received from the President, Professor Saundby; Dr. T. M. Carter (Westbury-on-Trym), Dr. F. M. Pope (Leicester), Dr. R. B. Mahon (Ballinrobe), Dr. J. S. Darling (Lurgan), Dr. F. W. Kidd (Dublin), Dr. R. A. Lyster (Winchester), Dr. D. G. Thomson (Thorpe, Norwich), Mr. D. J. Williams, F.R.C.S. (Llanely), and Dr. W. Johnson Smyth (Bournemouth).

NEW MEMBER OF COMMITTEE FOR IRELAND.

THE CHAIRMAN OF REPRESENTATIVE MEETINGS reported that Dr. Mark Cahill (Belfast) had been duly nominated by the Representatives of the Divisions in Ireland which had elected Mr. R. J. Johnstone to fill the vacancy on the Committee caused by his resignation, and that no other nomination had been received. Dr. Cahill was accordingly declared elected.

JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

As reported last week (p. 975), the Committee, at its meeting on April 18th, had before it the reply of the Joint Committee of National Insurance Commissioners (BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, April 20th, p. 917), and resolved to address a letter to the Insurance Committee calling attention to the fact that it was the policy of the Committee to arrange direct negotiations with the Insurance Commission as and when in the opinion of the Committee occasion arose. The following form of letter was adopted:

Letter to Joint Committee of National Insurance Commissioners.

Offices of the British Medical Association,
429, Strand, London, W.C.,
April 26th, 1912.

Sir,

In further reference to your letter of 15th instant my Committee instructs me to say that it entirely endorses the view that the members of the Advisory Committee whom the State Sickness Insurance Committee nominated for election at the request of the Insurance Commissioners, will be able to give advice and assistance in the preparation of the Regulations.

I am, however, to point out that the full Committee, elected by the Meeting of Representatives of the British Medical Association, is the only body with authority from the Association to convey to the Commissioners and to press on their acceptance the terms desired by the medical profession. Though these have been submitted by letter, circumstances may make it the duty of this Committee to seek a direct conference with the Commissioners in the hope that such arrangements may be made as will be satisfactory and fair to those who will be asked to undertake medical attendance and treatment under the Act.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) ALFRED COX,
Acting Medical Secretary.

The Secretary,
National Health Insurance Joint Committee,
Buckingham Gate, S.W.

[To this letter the following reply has been received:

National Health Insurance Joint Committee,
Buckingham Gate, London, S.W., May 1st, 1912.

Sir,

I am directed by the National Health Insurance Joint Committee to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, and to say that they have noted your statement as to the position and authority of the full Committee elected by the Meeting of Representatives of the British Medical Association.

I am to state that the Commissioners will be pleased to arrange a conference with the Committee, should circumstances arise which make it desirable for such a conference to be held.

I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) W. J. BRAITHWAITE.]

The Acting Medical Secretary,
British Medical Association.

It was resolved to invite all the medical members of the Joint Advisory Committee to meet the State Sickness Insurance Committee at 8.30 p.m. on Thursday, May 9th, the evening before the first meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee on May 10th.

MODE AND RATE OF REMUNERATION.

THE CHAIRMAN reported that a joint meeting of the Organization and Remuneration Subcommittees had decided to prepare two alternative model schemes of Public Medical Service for the provision of medical attendance, one based on the payment per attendance system, and the other on the capitation system.

FRESH CONTRACT APPOINTMENTS.

A communication was received from the Honorary Secretary of a Division stating that several practitioners in the area of the Division had been approached to take up fresh friendly society appointments. The Division desired to have the advice of the Committee as to the proper course to be pursued in such cases. The Committee expressed the opinion that it was inadvisable for practitioners to accept such appointments, but that if the Division thought there were sufficient reasons for allowing practitioners to accept such appointments they should be asked to give an undertaking to the Division or Provisional Medical Committee to the effect that they were prepared to resign such appointments if called upon to do so, and should be given to understand that no question of compensation for such appointments could arise.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PROFESSION.

The Committee completed its consideration of a further circular to be issued to Provisional Medical Committees relative to the organization of the profession. This circular has since been issued; it embodies a form of pledge, supplementary to the Undertaking signed by over 26,000 practitioners last year, defining the attitude of the members of the profession with regard to contract practice and medical charities.

COLLIERY PRACTICE.

The Committee considered a communication from the Barnsley and District Division embodying the letter from the Chancellor of the Exchequer contained in the report of the meeting of that Division published in the SUPPLEMENT to the JOURNAL of April 27th, p. 415. The Committee resolved to advise the Division to make it plain to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that any representations that colliery doctors might make would be made through the Association, as it was important to avoid any appearance of sectional or individual action. It was stated that it was hoped shortly to call another conference with the medical officers of collieries and works.

NEXT MEETING.

In view of the necessity for arranging for meetings of subcommittees on May 2nd, it was resolved that the next full meeting of the State Sickness Insurance Committee should be held on Thursday, May 9th.

Erratum.

MATERNITY BENEFIT AND OBSTETRIC INSTRUCTION.
The number of women within certain definite areas around the general hospitals in London attended during last year in their confinements by students under the general supervision of qualified medical practitioners was 11,500, and not 1,150 as printed last week, p. 975, in the report of the interview between the State Sickness Insurance Committee and the president and one of the honorary secretaries of the Obstetrical and Gynaecological Section of the Royal Society of Medicine.