

and assisting us as far as possible to put our hospital on a par with other modern clinical hospitals. They have had no cause of complaint, for only good has resulted to the patients from the influx of outside life. The students have been welcomed both by the patients and medical staff. Their aid is invaluable at operations with such a limited staff (two visiting and two resident doctors to 1,200 beds).

In an institution which contains such a mass of clinical material, students cannot fail to profit by the great variety of disease, and by the comparison of different stages of the same disease, or when different recognised methods of treatment are carried out on several similar cases side by side. As the cases in these institutions come from the labouring classes, the students are enabled to see the same class of disease which they will afterwards treat when they become dispensary doctors, which many of them do.

There are many other phases of the subject which I would like to enter into, such as the introduction of trained nurses, a few of whom we have succeeded in obtaining, etc., but I do not like to trespass further on your space. I am fully convinced that everything which tends to open up these institutions and modernise the management of their hospitals would benefit both the patients and the public at large by reducing the rates.—I am, etc.,

Cork, Jan. 28th. W. ASLEY CUMMINS, M.D.

#### THE ABUSE OF CLUBS.

SIR,—In reply to a letter signed "M.D. (a Club Doctor)" in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 26th, I wish to state that the tariff laid down for medical attendance for a member and his family in the rules adopted by the profession of the City of Cork for the regulation of club and society practice is as follows: minimum yearly fee 7s. 6d. if member's income is under £100; minimum yearly fee 15s. if member's income is under £200 and over £100. No one whose income exceeds £200 to be attended as a society patient. Medicine is extra, and the rate for this in Cork is 5s. per annum, so that the rate for medical attendance and medicine (generally included together in England) is: minimum yearly fee 12s. if income is under £100; minimum yearly fee 20s. if income is over £100 and under £200. It is well to remember that this is the minimum fee, lower than which is not allowed, but higher than which may be, and in many cases is, required by the medical officer.

It must also be borne in mind that in Ireland the great majority of society members whose incomes are under £100 are of the labouring and poor artisan class, and the labourer's rate of wages in Cork varies from 15s. to 18s. per week, while the corresponding class in England receive from 18s. to 25s. or 30s. per week.

We must also remember that the club rate of payment here has in many cases been considerably lower than the minimum now fixed, and that the clubs would not consent to even this moderate scale, and were able to import medical men to take them up at a reduction on the original low rate. Thus, in the Ancient Order of Foresters the rate for medical attendance for member and family was 6s. per annum. On the medical officer insisting on this rate being increased to comply with our rules, a medical man newly arrived in Cork tendered for and got the club at the rate of 5s. per annum.

In the Irish National Foresters the rate for medical attendance and medicine for a member and his family was previously 8s. per annum. Deducting 5s. from this as the rate for medicine, we have left only 3s. for medical attendance, this being considerably less than 1d. per week for medical attendance for member and family! Low as this rate is, a doctor hailing from the East End of London came and took them up at it on the former medical attendant resigning when the society refused to comply with our rules.

You will be surprised to learn that the Cork clubs have during the course of this struggle persistently represented in the city papers that we are forcing on them a much higher scale of payment than that paid by the corresponding clubs in England or in other towns in Ireland.

Of course in drawing up our rules we had regard to the condition of things prevailing here, and did not intend to make them applicable to other places. This is perhaps the safest

way to regulate the clubs, as local circumstances and wages have to be taken into account.

In conclusion, however, I can safely affirm that if a general code of rules is formulated for clubs in Great Britain and Ireland, and if the medical officers are prepared to resign their positions as we have done, in the event of their clubs not accepting these rules, we on our part will be willing to accept these rules (making exception in favour of five or six small societies who have agreed to abide by our present code), and will join heartily in this much-needed movement.—I am, etc.,

PHILIP G. LEE,  
Honorary Secretary, South of Ireland  
Branch, B.M.A.

January 28th.

#### THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL AND THE OBSTETRICAL SOCIETY.

SIR,—The brief report of my remarks at the meeting at the Midwives' Institute was not revised by me. The resolution which the General Medical Council has passed, and coupled with a threat, applies to a very small matter, namely, the form and wording of the certificate which the Obstetrical Society gives to midwives. The resolution is the first intimation that the Society has had that the General Medical Council sees anything objectionable in that certificate. I have no doubt that in these matters the Obstetrical Society will be willing to comply with the wishes of the General Medical Council, when it knows what those wishes are.

But some people present at that meeting thought that the resolution indicated an intention on the part of the General Medical Council to try and stop altogether the examination and certification of midwives. This was what I said I did not think the General Medical Council would "dare" to attempt. The word "dare" was not happily chosen. I should rather have said that I did not think the General Medical Council would be so unwise, so unmindful of the public good.—I am, etc.,

Harley Street, W., Jan. 28th.

G. ERNEST HERMAN.

#### THE CHAIR OF PHYSIOLOGY AT OXFORD.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a paragraph in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 19th, which seemed to indicate that I might be a candidate for the Waynflete Professorship, and it is probably in consequence of this that I have received many communications on the subject. Would you, therefore, permit me to state that I neither have, nor have had, any intention of offering myself for the Oxford Chair?—I am, etc.,

University College, London, Jan. 29th.

E. A. SCHAFER.

#### THE TREATMENT OF OBSTRUCTION OF THE BOWEL BY ELECTRICITY.

SIR,—I find that in my paper on the above subject, which appeared in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of January 26th, I accidentally omitted to state the length of time for which the electricity was applied. Allow me to state that in both cases I made the current act for twenty minutes.—I am, etc.,

Harley Street, W., Jan. 26th.

JULIUS ALTHAUS, M.D.

## MEDICO-LEGAL AND MEDICO-ETHICAL.

#### THE KENSINGTON MURDER.

[SPECIAL REPORT.]

THE trial of Reginald Treherne Bassett Sanderson for the murder of Augusta Dawes in the Holland Park Road, Kensington, on November 25th last, took place on January 30th, before Mr. Justice Wills, at the Central Criminal Court. Mr. Charles Mathews and Mr. Horace Avory prosecuted on behalf of the Treasury, and Mr. C. F. Gill and Mr. A. L. Gill represented the prisoner.

At the commencement of the proceedings, Mr. C. F. Gill said that he had received an intimation from the Treasury authorities that they were satisfied the defendant was not in a fit condition to plead. From the time that the prisoner's father instructed Messrs. Wontner for the defence, they had been unable to obtain any information from the accused, and it was quite clear from the certificates of several medical experts who had examined the young man that he was not fit to plead.

Mr. Justice Wills said that the proper course would be to empanel the jury to try the question as to whether the accused was unable to plead to the indictment.

Evidence was then given as to the prisoner's mental condition. Dr. George Walker, medical officer of H. M. Prison at Holloway, examined by Mr. Avory, said that the prisoner had been under his observation in Holloway Gaol since December 8th last. He examined the prisoner on his arrival at the prison as to his mental condition, and at the last