to pay. Combination of the profession in each town ought to do a great deal in this matter, as evidence in support of a given case should be easily obtainable. Special cases requiring special services must, of course, be considered on their individual merits. It is sufficient for us now to adopt some uniform scale for ordinary visits. I therefore recommend the above scale of fees of the Portsmouth Medical Union as the most equitable that has been suggested, and would urge upon practitioners in every town to demand payment upon this scale.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

T. FREDERICK PEARSE M.D.,

Sept. 4th, 1897.

Hon. Sec. Portsmouth Medical Union.

"IMMORALITY AMONG SCHOOL BOYS."

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have read with great care and interest Mr. Hime's article on the above subject, and whilst fully recognising that the vice to which he refers exists to a large extent, and that it is the duty of all concerned in the rearing of boys (not of head masters only, by the way) to do everything in their power to check it, I cannot for one moment agree with him as to the best means of preventing such habits. He divides these methods into two classes: (a) school arrangements; and (b) moral suasion. Of the latter of these I have not much to say, except that a few veiled remarks on the subject in the form of a lecture to a body of school boys do not strike me as likely to do much good. Much more to the point is the advice and warning given by him to each new boy on his arrival at school. It is with the school arrangements for preventing immorality that I have to quarrel, for, in brief, what do they amount to? Nothing more or less than a system of continual spying on the boys night and day, during playing and during working hours, without intermission; they are never allowed to be alone. This is a system calculated to bring out all that is underhanded, vicious, and deceitful in a boy, and to repress all that is above-board and honourable. This was not the plan of Dr. Arnold, the greatest of head masters; it approximates too closely to the French system of education to be agreeable to the majority of Englishmen. If, as Mr. Hime claims, "the companionship [during play hours] of a suitable master was always agreeable to the boys," then he must, indeed, have met with a curious collection of them; there is not one other like them in England. Boys, like everyone else, want to be free from restraint occasionally, and this is impossible with Mr. Hime's method of a master's bedroom opening out of each dormitory, with a master always superintending studies during school hours, and with a master always attached to the boys at play. Without going fully into the treatment of this habit I might call your attention to the old classical remedy—plenty of healthy exercise and not too much animal food—and suggest that these are the lines to go on to arrest the immorality of boys, not those of Mr. Hime.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

L. A. PARRY, M.D., B.S. Lond., F.R.C.S. Eng.

Bartholomew-road, N.W., Sept. 6th, 1897.

THE HOSPITAL REFORM ASSOCIATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I have much pleasure in informing you that the Earl of Stamford has kindly consented to preside at our conference on Oct. 21st. This will prove a source of gratification to all who are interested in the subjects we propose to discuss, as it is well known that his lordship has devoted much time and attention to the administration of hospitals. My council would like to suggest that the subject of outpatient administration should be dealt with under the following heads: (1) from a consultant's point of view, (2) from a general practitioner's point of view, (3) from an administrative point of view, and (4) from a patient's point of view.

In order that an expression of opinion may be obtained from as many gentlemen as possible it has been decided to make a time limit for readers of papers and speakers, and fifteen minutes for the former and five minutes for the latter have been fixed. Priority will be given to those gentlemen who have announced beforehand their intention of speaking.

I am, Sirs, your obedient servant,

Cardiff, Sept. 7th, 1897.

T. GARRETT HORDER, Hon. Sec.

HEALTH QUESTIONS AT THE ZÜRICH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR THE PROTECTION OF LABOUR.

(FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

A REMARKABLE and, in one sense, an unprecedented Congress has been held at Zürich. THE LANCET, of course, is in no wise concerned with the political aspect of this Congress; but the desire manifested by the members to assimilate internationally laws framed so as to protect the health of the working community of all civilised countries involves many questions in which your readers take a deep sympathetic interest. Undoubtedly one of the most effective arguments against legal restrictions upon unwholesome industries, nightwork, and the hours of labour generally is the danger of foreign competition. On the other hand, if similar laws were simultaneously enacted by other countries this danger might be reduced to a minimum. Such was precisely the aim and purpose of the Congress in question. But it does not suffice to merely express a good sentiment or to make advantageous proposals. Ideal reforms are more readily conceived than realised. The practical point depends on the force of the organisations which adhere to these proposed measures. Therefore it is necessary to say a few words as to the political elements which composed the Congress, not for the sake of dealing with politics, but so as to show that the Congress constituted a demonstration of sufficient importance to have some influence on European governments—an influence which will tend towards the improvement of public health. In advocacy of such restrictions on the freedom of labour as may be necessary to preserve the health of the workers there have been innumerable congresses, both national and international, composed of medical men, of sanitary reformers, and of philanthropists. Nor have the workmen themselves been indifferent to their own interests. The annual congresses of the trades unions of Great Britain invariably adopt a number of resolutions demanding better legislation for the protection of the health of the workers. Resolutions to the same effect are likewise discussed and approved at the political gatherings, national or international, of the working class or labour parties. But when such congresses have been representative congresses—that is to say, when they were composed exclusively of delegates elected by organised bodies—they were purely party gatherings. The Zürich Congress, on the other hand, may be qualified as unprecedented because, though composed of the elected representatives of constituted associations, it was not a party congress, but, on the contrary, brought together men belonging to antagonistic parties, who up till now have waged bitter war against each other. There were 375 delegates, representing fifteen different nationalities; of these, 107 were elected by Roman Catholic working-men's associations, some of these being priests, who, like the Belgian Abbé Daens, have acquired a wide reputation for their advocacy of the poor and oppressed. The Evangelical or Protestant associations sent only a few representatives. The other delegates were either trade unionists or members of political socialist organisations. There were also a considerable number of members of the Belgian, Swiss, Italian, Austrian, and German Parliaments, belonging some to the Socialists and some to the Roman Catholic parties. The chair was occupied alternately by M. Sherrer, a leading Swiss social democrat, and by M. Decurtius, leader of the Roman Catholic party in the Swiss National Council or Federal Parliament. Throughout the greatest order was maintained; most of the resolutions were carried unanimously, and in dealing with the need of international legislation for the protection of labour these old and inveterate adversaries forgot their differences and worked throughout harmoniously and amicably, and this, too, in spite of the trying fact that the Congress sat during eight hours a day for an entire week. That such heterogeneous elements should thus have been brought together shows that the demands made are widely approved and not confined to one single faction or party, but are supported by both orthodox and heterodox organisations existing in no less than fifteen different countries. Therefore, there can be no doubt but that the Congress will