endeavour to raise the professional knowledge and status of medical men and make them worthy of proper professional emoluments; and we should, by all means in our power, induce our students to combine, wherever they are, against cheap clubs and similar abuses. All hospital staffs, especially in country towns, may well take to heart the excellent example which was set them at Swansea. They should definitely take up the line that a hospital exists for charity in the first place and for medical education and progress in the second. The "sixpenny doctors" will still exist; they will, however, become fewer, and be recruited from the inferior grades in the profession. The public will in time become educated to the danger and uselessness of such modes of obtaining professional advice. There are many meetings for purely professional purposes held in our larger cities and towns. The thought of an annual congress for the discussion of matters of professional reform and political combination may well engage the attention of all our associations of medical men during the present year.

I am, Sirs, yours faithfully,

M.D.

June 15th, 1896.

MEDICAL BULLETINS, PROFESSIONAL ETHICS, AND COMMERCIAL SPECULATION.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—During the past few weeks there must have been many like myself who have been vainly waiting and expecting some one in the higher ranks of the profession to utter a protest or ask for an explanation of the unedifying spectacle which the illness of the distinguished President of our Royal Academy has been the means of placing before us. One cannot recollect a case where the constant reiteration of the medical attendant's name has been carried to a greater length than in the sad illness of this illustrious man. For some weeks now the public has been daily (often twice) treated, not merely to information about the progress of the sufferer himself, in which, of course, we all have a sympathetic interest, but also to the important fact that his medical adviser, whose name is each time given, visited him at such and such an hour. What, Sirs, is the purpose of these details? The public may want to be constantly informed of the distinguished patient's condition, it may also interest them to know who is in charge of the case, but after having given the latter information on two or three occasions, what can be the purpose of its constant appearance unless it is to keep the attendant's name before the public? It may be said that the practitioner is not responsible for the mistaken pressman who is desirous of every detail of information for "copy," but such an excuse is too feeble to bear investigation. Undoubtedly it is almost impossible for a practitioner to avoid the publication of his name in the early days of the illness of any distinguished person, but every medical man must and does know that the profession to which he belongs, and of whose honour he should be jealous, strongly disapproves of anything that could be interpreted as an advertisement, in which the attendant acquiesces. A few polite lines to the editors of the papers in which such objectionable statements had repeatedly appeared, requesting them only to give the substance of the bulletins without time after time mentioning the attendant's name, would be certain to have the desired effect.

In spite of our so-called professional ethics (surely rapidly becoming a name only) this form of abuse has become so frequent of late that I would not have considered the present instance anything more than a particularly fine specimen of its kind were it not that a more serious offence has within the last three weeks been added to it. We have been informed and startled by announcements made at various times in at least two of the morning papers that the improvement which fortunately had taken place in the President's condition had been fairly maintained and that this was attributed to inhalation of ozone introduced into the treatment by the practitioner in charge of the case whose name is each time given. Then, Sirs, one felt surprised that no voice was raised to ask if such announcements were in keeping with the traditions of our profession, and, if not, were we to congratulate ourselves on the innovation? But the climax was yet to come. Last week I, in common, no doubt, with many others and thousands of the lay public, received the enclosed prospectus

from a commercial ozone company in which you will find the following passages: "In addition to the uses for industrial purposes to which ozone may be put it is probable that in future it will play a very prominent part in medical practice, and the following extracts from London newspapers are cited in support of its value. From the *Times*, May 26th, 1896: "Sir John Millais' condition was reported last night to be satisfactory. It is stated that to meet certain complications which arose in the condition of Sir John Millais Dr. Hames, who has been in constant attendance since the operation, decided on the application of constant inhalations of ozone. This was immediately followed by beneficial results which have since continued." From the *Standard*, June 1st, 1896: "The marked improvement in the condition of the President of the Royal Academy noted on Saturday morning has been fairly maintained, and this is attributed to the ozone inhalations introduced into the treatment by Dr. Hames." This prospectus was followed by the *Standard* bulletin: "The ozone treatment introduced into the case of the President of the Royal Academy continues to give most beneficial results, enabling the patient to obtain a considerable amount of good rest. On Saturday morning Dr. Hames was able to issue an exceedingly favourable statement as follows," &c. Alas! Sirs, to what have we come! Well may men often smile when professional ethics are mentioned, and rapidly turn conversation to a subject where their words have some pretence of meaning in them. One is pained to think that the illness of a distinguished man should be made capital of for a commercial puff, and humiliated when one sees the name of a member of our profession appear in the latter. I presume, of course, queer though the matter looks, that this prospectus has been issued without the knowledge and consent of Sir John Millais' medical attendant. Anyhow, I think he owes it to his profession to clear the question up without delay. Should he be unwilling to do so it seems high time that the authorities of the Colleges to which he and I belong should take the matter in hand. I enclose my card, and remain, Sirs,

Yours faithfully,

June 16th.

M.D., M.R.C.S. & L.R.C.P., &c.

THE BATTLE OF THE CLUBS.—XXXIII.

(Continued from p. 1675.)

THE GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL AND THE MEDICAL AID ASSOCIATIONS.

AT the meeting of the Executive Committee of the General Medical Council of June 1st the following letter was read:—

Friendly Societies' Medical Alliance Council,
April 21st, 1896.

DEAR SIR,—At the annual conference of the above, held at Wednesbury on Easter Monday, Mr. S. Pride of Luton, Mr. Dickinson of Lincoln, and Mr. M. J. Williment of Norwich, were appointed a deputation to wait on the General Medical Council at their next meeting for the purpose of laying before them the present attitude of some members of the medical profession towards friendly societies' medical associations. If you will arrange the day and hour most convenient to the Council to receive the deputation and acquaint me, I will then arrange for the deputation to be there at the appointed time and place.

Yours most respectfully,

W. J. C. Miller, Esq. JOHN BROWN, 26, Markham-street, York.

It was resolved "that Mr. Brown be informed that the executive committee cannot recommend the General Medical Council to receive the deputation referred to."

It may be that the executive committee was within its powers when it intercepted a communication of this character and deprived the representatives of the Friendly Societies' Medical Alliance of an opportunity of stating their grievances as to the attitude of "some members of the medical profession" towards their associations. No doubt they base themselves on the conclusion of the Council that such matters are not within their jurisdiction. All the same we somewhat regret that the deputation was not received. These associations are sadly ignorant of the feeling of the medical profession—not "some of its members," as the letter would have us believe—on the subject of such associations and of the part they have tried to play in trying to degrade medical practice and medical practitioners. They are even more misinformed if they think that the Council would be willing to force medical men to alter their attitude of hostility to such a system. A few minutes' interview with the General Medical Council might have undeceived them on both points. They will at any rate realise that they have nothing to

expect from the General Medical Council. The associations will receive more and more proof that the profession as a whole is against them, and will do well to come to terms with it confining the privileges of their associations to working men and their families and paying them properly as they are well able to do.

If the General Medical Council is so restricted in its disciplinary functions the medical corporations and the voluntary associations of the profession are not so restricted and may make their power felt. If the voluntary associations of the profession can be moved to a full discharge of their duties in this matter there will be little need for the use of the disciplinary power of the bodies.

MANCHESTER.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Jubilee of the Swinton Schools.

THE report of the Poor-law Schools Committee on the barrack schools of London has drawn attention to some of the workhouse schools in the provinces. Now those at Swinton, about four miles from the city, under the management of the Manchester guardians, are among the largest in the country, and their jubilee has just been celebrated. They were opened in February, 1846, and provide accommodation for about 760 in the main building and 110 in the hospital and receiving wards. When they were built there was no controversy about the "barrack" system, the "cottage home," and "boarding-out." The chief aim was to get the children away from the workhouse with its degrading and vicious influence, and as there were many of them it seemed obvious that a large house was required to hold them. There are now about 750 boys and girls there, chiefly Manchester children, but a few are boarders from the Barton and Wigan unions. Though schools would not now be built as in 1846, it must be allowed that these have been well and humanely managed. The children may be divided into two classes—those who spend all or the greater part of their school life in the school, and those who come and go, entering and perhaps leaving in the same quarter and almost certainly in the year, for the guardians, of course, have no power to detain a child against the will of the parents or legal protectors. Of 700 in the school a year or two ago about 600 were liable to sudden removal, so that it is easy to understand that with this shifting population the maintenance of discipline and "character" is no easy task, and yet we read "that there is no record at the Manchester workhouse—at least, for the last sixteen years—of any boy who had gone through the school entering the workhouse to live there. Many have worked themselves into good positions and they and others speak kindly of their early life." Besides the scholastic work the boys learn various trades—as tailoring, shoemaking, gardening, &c. There is a good swimming-bath, which is very popular, and many of the lads would do credit to any swimming club. A short time since an article appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* containing some severe criticisms of the London schools, in which the Swinton schools were incidentally mentioned as being the largest in the country, and this article was thought likely by the guardians to make the public believe the Swinton schools were deserving of the same condemnation. Mr. McDougall, chairman of the schools committee, thought it necessary, therefore, to refer to the matter at the meeting of the guardians. The *Guardian* said that the "barrack" schools were: "(1) directly injurious to the health of the children; (2) detrimental to their mental development; (3) harmful to their morals; and (4) more costly and more difficult to maintain in proper working order than smaller institutions would be." Mr. McDougall said they were almost free from ophthalmia, though many years ago it was prevalent, but was got rid of by simple means. The children no longer used common wash-bowls; each one had a jet of clean water to wash with and had three clean towels a day. It was said that "eczema and other skin diseases are always prevalent" in "barrack" schools, but it was not so at Swinton. And as to their physical development, he said that the remark that the boys were "stunted and narrow-chested" and most of the girls "below the normal height, and the appalling monotony of their lives makes them tend to become dull, sullen, and mechanical, and

to lose interest alike in work and play," was certainly not the case at Swinton; "if there was one thing on which they prided themselves it was that when the children played they were merry, and when they were working they felt their work had some purpose. The guardians sought to make their lives bright and to fit both boys and girls to earn their living." The cost per week is a little over 5s., and the guardians are not anxious to make it less, for they wish the children to have good food and clothing. Of course, when one knows the places from which most of the children come, the character and physical condition of the parents and the lives led by a large proportion of them, it would be marvellous if the signs of degeneration marking the parents did not descend to their offspring. The short period during which the majority are in the school is not sufficient to overcome the disadvantages of their start in life, but where more time is given both boys and girls improve physically in a remarkable manner. It is said that the headmaster has many applications for any of the girls who will go into domestic service, which, however, is not always popular with them. Many go to factory work or are apprenticed. On the whole I may say that if the metropolitan "barrack" schools had been as intelligently managed as the schools at Swinton the report concerning them would have read somewhat differently.

The Coronership.

At the last meeting of the City Council Mr. Smelt, barrister, who had been for many years deputy coroner, was appointed coroner in the place of the late Mr. Herford at a salary of £800 a year. The late coroner had been non-existent—so far as the performance of the duties of the office was concerned—for at least fourteen or fifteen years, with the exception of what he no doubt considered the important duty of receiving the fees. By the conditions of his appointment he was paid by fees and was irremovable, and he retained his office to the end. He was a man of strong will and some pugnacity and in his active days was usually in antagonism with the medical profession of Manchester. However, nothing but good should be said of the departed, and as the retention of his office long after he was incapacitated was no doubt legal he perhaps considered—for his opinions on many matters would by most people be thought eccentric—that it would be illegal to resign. At the council meeting Professor Sinclair made some observations criticising Mr. Smelt's proceedings so far as they related to medical evidence and post-mortem examinations, and said that one of the objects of a coroner's inquest was to ascertain the cause of death. On taking his seat for the first time as coroner for the city, Mr. Smelt "made some remarks on the position and duties of coroners" and wished "to brush away" a good deal of misunderstanding. He said inquests were held for the benefit and protection of the public. "It was the duty of the coroner's court to ascertain the cause of death, not for statistical, medical, or scientific purposes, but to find out whether any person was responsible. So long as he presided in that court he should never order a post-mortem examination unless he believed it to be absolutely necessary." His reasoning seems peculiar, for after stating it to be a duty to ascertain the cause of death he goes on as follows: "If the jury were satisfied that a case was a perfectly straightforward one and that nobody was to blame, why go to the trouble of ascertaining the *exact* cause of death?" It is a duty, therefore, to ascertain the cause of death, but not the exact cause; it need only be known *inexactly* as it is merely for the benefit of the public, though it is not clear how inaccuracy is for the public benefit. Is this view in exact accord with common sense? In a subsequent part of his address Mr. Smelt said that where it was possible he obtained the evidence of gentlemen who were in the habit of making post-mortem examinations and of giving evidence in courts, because he thought it better that they should have the evidence of experts. This is a wise proceeding and will be generally approved, especially when it is wished to ascertain the exact, and not the *inexact*, cause of death. No doubt the original intention of the court was to learn if death had been the result of foul play, but it is notorious that even "intelligent" juries often fail to return correct verdicts, especially where the coroner is a lawyer and not a medical man; but even if this were not so there is no reason why the coroner's court should not aid in rendering the Registrar-General's returns