THE BATTLE OF THE CLUBS.—XXX.¹

(Continued from p. 1314.)

LINCOLN: A MEDICAL PROTECTION FUND STARTED.

WE have received the following communication from Dr. Carline, which we gladly publish. His letter tells very succinctly and clearly the way in which the medical profession has been exploited in Lincoln, and confirms fully our Special Commissioner's report. We wish the New Provident Association every good fortune. The complete success that has attended similar movements when the medical men have determined to help the poor in their own fashion and consistently with their own dignity, and not at the beck and call of lay wire-pullers, encourages us to believe that the disinterested action of the three gentlemen who, for the good of the profession, have refused further connexion with the existing medical aid associations will be duly rewarded. In the meantime we recommend Dr. Carline's letter to the generous attention of our readers.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—I was requested by a meeting of the medical profession held at Lincoln on the 11th inst. to ask you to kindly insert the following appeal for funds in your next issue.

I am, Sirs, yours truly,

Lincoln, May 12th, 1896. W. A. CARLINE, Hon. Sec.

To the Editors of THE LANCET.

SIRS,—Doubtless the majority of your readers have watched with interest the fight which is in progress in Lincoln. However, when appealing to the profession for assistance a short *résumé* of the facts may be useful. The area worked by the Lincoln medical clubs has a population of 50,000, and of this number some 20,000 obtain their medical attendance through the clubs at reduced rates. The clubs have amalgamated and formed two large institutions managed by lay committees. The resident medical officers, though debarred from private practice, do not receive the whole of the money earned by their exertions. All classes are invited to join these institutions, hence the medical officers have to attend wealthy tradesmen and others in a large way of business as well as those who have retired in affluence. All the abuses of the club system are here in their worst forms. The medical officers of these institutions, having felt that under these circumstances their continuance in office was not in accordance with the usual standard of professional ethics, approached the Lincoln Medical Society with a view to combined action for the remedying of these abuses, and as a result the clubs were asked to establish a wage limit and make sundry other alterations. The committees, however, which are chiefly composed of the interested members, have refused to consider the proposals, and consequently three of the medical officers have resigned and the private practitioners of Lincoln have pledged themselves unanimously to refuse to meet in consultation any persons who may be induced to fill the vacancies. To prevent any injustice to the working-man a provident medical association is being formed which will be chiefly under medical management and will be free from the abuses of the present institutions. In the meantime the lot of the three medical officers who have resigned is a hard one. They have no private practice to fall back on, and yet in the interests of the profession they have thrown up their appointments, thus cutting off their only source of income. Such disinterested action throws a responsibility on their professional brethren, and to meet this the "Lincoln Medical Protection Fund" has been started. The Lincoln medical practitioners confidently appeal to the profession to help them and show their appreciation of the generous way in which these gentlemen have considered the general good rather than their own personal profit. It should be stated that the fund will help to maintain these gentlemen in the New Provident Association until this pays its way, the success of which would mean victory for the profession, and a victory in this stronghold of the club system will immensely help the cause elsewhere. Subscriptions will be thankfully

¹ The previous articles on this subject were published in THE LANCET on the following dates: (1) Aug. 24th, 1895, Brussels; (2) Aug. 31st, 1895, Brussels; (3) Sept. 21st, 1895, Portsmouth; (4) Sept. 28th, 1895, Portsmouth; (5) Oct. 5th, 1895, Eastbourne; (6) Oct. 12th, 1895, Lincoln; (7) Oct. 26th, 1895, Lincoln; (8) Nov. 2nd, 1895, Grimsby; (9) Nov. 9th, 1895, Bexhill-on-Sea; (10) Nov. 16th, 1895, Hull; (11) Nov. 23rd, 1895, Hull; (12) Dec. 7th, 1895, York; (13) Dec. 14th, 1895, Northampton; (14) Dec. 21st, 1895, Fermanagh Medico-Ethical Association; (15) Dec. 28th, 1895, Northampton; (16) Jan. 4th, 1896, Birmingham; (17) Jan. 18th, 1896, Birmingham; (18) Jan. 25th, 1896, Club Practices in Rural and Mining Districts; (19) Feb. 1st, 1896, The Formation of a Provident Medical Association at Folkestone; (20) Feb. 8th, 1896, The Manchester Medical Guild and Medical Aid Associations; (21) Feb. 15th, 1896, The Leicester and Leicestershire Provident Dispensary; (22) Feb. 22nd, 1896, The Organisation of the Profession at Leicester; (23) March 7th, 1896, Loughborough: Local Efforts Defeated by Consultants from Neighbouring Towns; (24) March 14th, 1896, Medical Aid Societies in Small Heath; Medical Clubs at Stockport; (25) March 21st, 1896, General Meeting of the Profession and the Formation of a Union at Nottingham; (26) April 4th, 1896, Nottingham; the London and Manchester Industrial Assurance Company, Limited; the Public-house Medical Aid Clubs; United Action at Lincoln; (27) April 11th, 1896, Leicester and Wolverhampton; a Hastings Dispensary wound up; (28) April 25th, 1896, Walsall, Formation of a Medical Union; the Medical Profession and the Friendly Societies; Trade and Medicine; the Family Clubs; Women's Public-house Clubs; (29) May 9th, 1896, Sheffield: An Ancient Medical Society; Workmen Sweaters; The Old Grievances; Probable Formation of a Medical Union.

received and acknowledged by the honorary treasurer, Dr. W. A. Carline, Lincoln. Signed by request of a meeting of the Lincoln practitioners. GEO. MITCHINSON, Chairman.

Amounts already received or promised:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
C. Harrison	5	5	0	W. H. B. Brook... ..	5	5	0
G. Mitchinson	5	5	0	E. Palmer	5	5	0
J. T. Collier	5	5	0	W. A. Carline	5	5	0
G. H. Mounsey	5	5	0	D. Johnston	5	5	0
F. S. Lambert	5	5	0	E. Whitwell	5	5	0
F. Genney	5	5	0	W. McDade	5	5	0
Wm. O'Neill	5	5	0	A. P. Russell	5	5	0
G. Lowe	5	5	0	F. B. Cooper	2	2	0
B. McFarland	5	5	0	G. J. R. Lowe	2	2	0
E. M. Symptom... ..	5	5	0	A. D. Roberts	2	2	0
J. S. Thompson... ..	5	5	0	T. H. White	2	2	0
C. Brook	5	5	0	A. L. Peacock	1	1	0
W. J. Cant	5	5	0	D. J. G. Watkins	1	1	0

BENEFIT SOCIETIES AND MEDICAL MEN.

A conference was held at the Town-hall, Trowbridge, on May 2nd between representatives of sick benefit societies and medical men in response to a circular issued by Mr. C. E. S. Flemming, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond., of Freshford, near Bath, setting forth that "it is the opinion of medical men that there is an abuse of friendly societies, whereby persons obtain medical aid who are not in a position to need it, which not only affects the various medical officers, but is in many and important respects harmful to the societies themselves. Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice presided, and the medical aspect of the case was described by Mr. C. E. S. Flemming and Mr. A. W. Dalby, L.R.C.P. Edin., of Frome. Medical men from Trowbridge, Bradford-on-Avon, Calne, Devizes, Warminster, Frome, and Freshford were present, and also delegates representing the principal friendly societies in West Wiltshire and the Frome district of Somerset. Mr. Flemming said that club practice was not sufficiently remunerative to enable a medical man to live; he must have a certain proportion of private patients, and if he found these private patients becoming club patients it was only natural that he should complain. No medical man, however, objected to attend a *bonâ-fide* working man as a club patient. A long discussion followed. Many of the delegates held that the medical man had a grievance, but considerable opposition was shown by them to a suggestion that those who are in receipt of £2 per week wages or who live in a house of the rateable value of £15 per annum should not be taken as club patients, and they stated that circumstances in these respects varied in each district. The following was ultimately agreed to with a few dissentients: "That the medical men at this meeting have suggested that £2 per week wages and £15 per year rateable value be adopted as the limit to prevent persons obtaining medical aid from friendly societies who by position do not require it, and that it be recommended by this meeting to the various friendly societies to consider whether any, and if so what, limit can be imposed upon the membership of friendly societies so as to accomplish the above objects."

MEDICAL UNION AT NOTTINGHAM.

On Wednesday, May 6th, the second meeting of this union was held. It was announced that a large proportion of local medical men had already joined the union, while others had expressed their intention of doing so. The meeting proceeded to elect a president, treasurer, and two secretaries, and a council consisting of fourteen representatives of the town with ten of the adjoining district. The council was instructed to at once consider measures to combat the abuses of medical aid and life assurance societies. The meeting was very well attended and throughout harmonious.

THE ASHANTI EXPEDITION.

(BY OUR SPECIAL WAR CORRESPONDENT.)

V.¹

The Troops in Sickness.

I WILL now give details relating to our troops in sickness as far as the recent campaign to Ashanti is concerned, and in doing so will endeavour to show how varied have been the symptoms, not only in intensity, but also in duration, which

¹ Nos. I., II., III., and IV. were published in THE LANCET of April 4th, 11th, and 25th, and May 2nd, 1896, respectively.