

ticular section shall pay annually \$5 and shall have the right to attend all the meetings of his section, but must pay an additional \$1 annually if he wishes to use the library, and a further subscription of \$2.50 for each additional section. 10. The general management of the society shall be under the control of a general council consisting of the president, the presidents of the various sections, two treasurers, two librarians, two secretaries and eight other fellows. 11. A monthly publication shall be issued except in the months of July, August and September, and be called "The Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine." It will be under the control of an editorial committee and will contain a record of the work of each section during the previous month. In addition the committee will select, subject to the approval of the general council, such papers as they may consider worthy of publication in the transactions of the society. The committee further suggested that it would be an advantage to form a committee of representatives of the various sections to receive all papers to be read. This committee would have power to decide before which section a paper should be read and whether other sections of the society be asked to join in the discussion. The committee concludes that the union of the medical societies will do much to enhance the prestige of British medicine and to increase the value of the work carried on by the existing societies, and that it will be a great convenience to the profession.

The Increase of Suicide.

At the Medicolegal Society Dr. Wynn Westcott, coroner for Northeast London, read an important paper on suicide. He found that inquest juries bring in only about 1 per cent. of suicides as guilty of *felo de se*; in cases where there is no evidence of the mental condition of the person they attribute the act to temporary insanity. He said that patients are often prematurely discharged from asylums and in the exigencies of home life slay themselves. Of predisposing causes alcoholism is the most common, then the presence of disease. An additional grievance or an overmastering passion, he stated, is usually the proximate cause. The relation of the sexes is very constant—three men to one woman. The rate of suicide per million of the population is constantly increasing; thus in 1861 it was 66; in 1881, 77; in 1891, 85; in 1901, 96, and in 1903, 105.

Correspondence

The Yellow Fever Epidemic.

NATCHEZ, MISS., Aug. 15, 1905.

To the Editor:—In THE JOURNAL, August 12, you did a palpable injustice to some of the best people in the South when you refer to the quarantines as relics of the middle ages. Please let me call your attention to the report of the president of the Louisiana State Board of Health, in which he admits that he was aware of the existence of the fever on the 13th, but waited eight days before admitting it, thus allowing the people from the infected area time to scatter all over the states of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. It is this continued failure to keep faith with the people that has forced the present harsh measures. We know that non-intercourse with infected areas will prevent the introduction of the disease into the healthy towns, and propose to follow up the plan that has proved safe in other times. We have had two small epidemics here; in both cases the infection was brought here when there were no reported cases in New Orleans. We lost some of our best people each time, and the fever spread in spite of every known method of checking its progress.

I have had considerable experience in the treatment of the fever though not an immune, and I may tell you that I am unable to prevent the mosquitoes biting either myself or the patients. My own house is screened throughout with the finest of wire screens, and each bed has the very best mosquito netting, yet in spite of all these precautions we have to endure the annoyance and stings of these pests. All southern people know these things, and for this reason they seriously doubt the possibility of checking the spread of the infection by means of screens. They know the practical impossibility of preventing the patient being bitten.

As to the quarantines: We do not enjoy them at all ourselves. They almost destroy trade and prevent business of all kinds. But we can not help ourselves. We do not know where

the infection has spread, so a policy of exclusion is being practiced. We harm no one; simply say to them, "For the present please stay at home." If you will come here and visit us, and let us show you our death records, we are sure that you would favor anything that gave promise of safety from this pestilence.

It may be that some reporter allowed his imagination to run away with his regard for the truth, and to that report you referred. But to my mind, the people have acted with great forbearance, considering the vast amount they had at stake. We do all in our power to render the six days' detention as pleasant as possible to all concerned. But this city is certainly closed to the world for the present. If it were not so, persons leaving New Orleans could go direct to Chicago, procure a health certificate, and be here in less than three days.

I trust that you will publish this little note, and you can refer to the issue of THE JOURNAL for August 12 for the report of Dr. Souchon to which reference is made.

J. C. BALLARD, M.D.

An Indorsement of Governor Pennypacker by Philippine Islands Medical Association.

MANILA, P. I., July 12, 1905.

To the Editor:—By direction of the Committee on Public Policy and Legislation of the Philippine Islands Medical Association, I have the honor to forward a copy of a resolution tendering a vote of thanks to Governor Pennypacker of Pennsylvania for the service which he has rendered the medical profession of the world and the people of his state in withholding his signature from the bill passed by the legislature to legalize and regulate the practice of osteopathy in Pennsylvania.

Governor Pennypacker has evidently given the subject of class legislation more study than is usually bestowed on it by chief executives, as is shown by his clear understanding of those principles of ethics and justice for which the medical profession has always stood.

He could have rendered his people no greater service than that which has been accomplished by his veto which may truly be called "A veto for the protection of the people of Pennsylvania from the evils of legalized quackery."

Very respectfully,

R. E. L. NEWBERNE,

Secretary-Treasurer, Philippine Islands Medical Association.

RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, It having come to the knowledge of the Committee on Public Policy and Legislation of the Philippine Islands Medical Association, through the editorial pages of THE JOURNAL of the American Medical Association, that Governor Pennypacker of Pennsylvania has vetoed the bill passed by the legislature to legalize and regulate the practice of osteopathy in that state; and

WHEREAS, The reasons given by the governor for his course are so manifestly just and fair, it was, on motion,

Resolved, That the Committee on Public Policy and Legislation of the Philippine Islands Medical Association tender a vote of thanks to the governor of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the careful study which he has given this objectionable bill, and for the just, courageous and scholarly stand which he has taken in the interest of science and justice, and for the protection of the people against the evils of class legislation. It was further

Resolved, That the secretary of the committee be instructed to forward copies of the resolution of the committee to Governor Pennypacker and to THE JOURNAL of the American Medical Association.

Finsen's Light Institute.

COPENHAGEN, July 11, 1905.

To the Editor:—After a week spent at Finsen's Light Institute I have begun to realize the magnitude and extent of the work performed here. Each day from 150 to 200 patients receive treatment, among whom one can recognize types from all civilized nations. The institute itself is situated in a quiet part of Copenhagen, the streets leading thereto being amply provided with shade trees which produce a pleasing and restful effect as one approaches the buildings. The institute physicians, four in number, are well trained and courteous. The government annually subscribes 30,000 kroner toward the maintenance of the institution. This, together with the Nobel prize money which Finsen munificently tendered the institute, has rendered possible its present complete organization.

All who seek treatment obtain it. Those who can afford to pay do so, and those who can not afford to pay receive