

THE NECESSITY FOR WORK.

This year the members of the ASSOCIATION should make extraordinary efforts to increase the membership and swell the subscription list of the JOURNAL. A little personal effort will accomplish great things. The only ASSOCIATION in our country having direct connection with the State medical societies of the Union, there can be no question of its representative character.

Membership is now practically unlimited by any technical barrier, and every principle of patriotic pride should urge us to have one of the strongest medical associations in the world. We gained largely at San Francisco by the accessions from the Pacific coast; let us hold fast to what we have gained, by every member promptly remitting his annual subscription. Our ASSOCIATION would long ago have had ten thousand members if it were not that by sheer inattention many of those who join at these annual meetings allow their membership to lapse.

The JOURNAL was greatly enlarged last year, and it will soon move into better quarters, and be printed on its own presses. It will be a source of pride to the members to know that, notwithstanding the gloomy prognostications made after the Milwaukee meeting, by certain critics, the affairs of the JOURNAL were never more flourishing, or its prospects brighter, but it must not lag in the race. "A strong pull, and a pull all together," will soon bring the ASSOCIATION and its JOURNAL to a fair and friendly rivalry with the British Association, whose continued prosperity excites our highest admiration.

AS IT STRIKES THEM IN FRANCE.

M. MARCEL BAUDOUIN, of *Le Progrès Médical* also makes merry over the fact commented upon in the JOURNAL of June 30, under the heading, "Is This a Sanitary Utopia?" In a recent number of his lively journal he says it becomes his duty "to record a sufficiently extraordinary fact; one that is, most assuredly, not on the point of being at once reproduced in France"—that is, the establishment of systematic courses of instruction in sanitary science for the members of the German Legislature. M. BAUDOUIN says:

"In Paris we have, it is true, a course on social hygiene at the *Hôtel de Ville*; but PROFESSOR A. J. MARTIN would astonish us mightily were he to write us that his habitual audience included the majority of the Municipal Council! Can you fancy seeing PROFESSOR PROUST holding forth at the *Palais Bourbon*? When he is obliged to speak there as a Commissioner of the Government he is listened to for a little while at least, because he knows how to manage the most refractory of audiences. But does any one suppose for a moment that were he not speaking on behalf of electors, large numbers of the people's representatives would think it worth while to come and wear out their trousers on the benches of the dynamited hall, under the pretence of learning how to avoid infecting Paris with dirty water? What would thenceforth

become of the famous interpellations, with a similar caliber to those of the *Seine-et-Oise* Deputies?"

He facetiously closes—"A post to be filled of which I had not dreamed: Professor of Deputy's Hygiene! I claim it, if, peradventure, it be not already bespoken. Berlin is an amusing place; one does not there get bored!"

There are other countries, it may be remarked, whose legislators need instruction in public health matters more than do those of France. In a late issue (July 21) we recounted the formation of an extra-Parliamentary committee of physicians, members of the French Parliament, to investigate pending questions relating to the profession, to poor-relief organization and to the protection of the public health. Among the twelve Senators and twenty-two Deputies who participated in the formation of this committee were many of equal celebrity in medicine and hygiene with those who are lecturing to the German Legislature, and *Le Progrès* itself announces the recent election of another medical man, DR. MARFAN of the Aude, to the Chamber of Deputies, and the appointment of DRs. LOURTIES and VIGER to the French Cabinet—the former as Minister of Commerce.

The recognition of medical men and medical matters in the British Parliament is too well known to need more than mention, and in Italy and elsewhere on the Continent the profession exerts an important influence in matters of legislation and the affairs of government.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON.

Tenure of Medical Offices—Health Officer—Sanitary Affairs—Other Matters.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 4, 1894.

To the Editor:—The Commissioners of the District of Columbia have adopted a rule limiting the term of service of police surgeons, physicians to the poor, and health officer to three years. Heretofore there has been no limitation to time of service—the new rule does not prevent re-appointment to office.

Dr. C. M. Hammett, who three years ago succeeded Dr. Smith Townshend as Health Officer, tendered his resignation to the Commissioners on July 31, and it has been accepted. Dr. Hammett has been a successful practitioner in this city for twenty-five years and is a very accomplished gentleman. During his term of service in the health office he had many opportunities to exhibit his skill and judgment which he always did to the entire satisfaction of the profession and the public. He greatly improved the system of medical care of the poor, re-arranging the districts and filling all vacancies in the staff with physicians of the highest ability. His kindness and courtesy will always be remembered by those who had business with his office. He was, upon acceptance of his resignation, appointed to the office of Coroner.

Dr. W. C. Woodward who for the past few months had the office of Coroner, resigned and was appointed Health Officer to succeed Dr. Hammett. He is a graduate of the

Medical Department of the Georgetown University, Class of 1889, and late Resident Physician in the Emergency Hospital, is very popular as a physician and will have an opportunity to distinguish himself in his new position.

The conference report on the appropriation bills for the city is agreed to and contains a number of interesting matters. One thousand dollars is allowed for horse hire and expenses of Coroner's Department, with salary of \$1,800.

The additional appropriation of \$60,000 proposed by the Senate for the collection of garbage was stricken out, and a clause inserted requiring the Commissioners to specially investigate the best methods of collecting and disposing of garbage, and to receive proposals under such methods and report the result at the next session of Congress. The Senate amendment legalizing the ordinances of the late Board of Health of the District was agreed to.

For work on the receiving reservoir of the aqueduct \$52,500 was provided, and the requirement inserted that the work shall be completed within the fiscal year, at a cost of \$90,000. For protecting the conduit at waste weir No. 1, \$5,000 was provided.

The emergency fund of the District was increased to \$25,000, and the fund for the support of convicts fixed at \$25,000.

For transportation of paupers \$3,500 was provided.

The item of \$1,710 for a new family building for the Reform School for boys was omitted and the Senate amendment was stricken out, which transfers the management and control of the Reform School to the Commissioners.

It was provided that not exceeding \$300,000 of the surplus revenues of the District on July 1, 1894, shall be applied to the payment of the principal of the debt incurred for increasing the water supply. The Senate item of \$1,000 for five members of the plumbing board was omitted. The Superintendent of Charities received a messenger at \$840.

An appropriation of \$165,000 was provided for assessment and permit work, and the Senate provision regulating such work was retained.

For relief sewers and replacing obstructed sewers, \$65,000 was agreed upon, and for main and pipe sewers, \$90,000. Authority was granted to enter into a contract for the construction of the Rock Creek intercepting sewer at \$80,000, and \$20,000 was appropriated to commence the work. The provision of the House concerning the paving of streets between the rails and tracks of street railways was omitted. The Senate amendment requiring fenders on street cars was retained.

The Senate provision concerning the condemnation of lands through the Prospect Hill Cemetery for the extension of North Capitol Street was retained.

For sweeping, sprinkling and cleaning streets \$137,500 was provided, and the Senate provision that \$5,000 of the amount may be used in the suburbs was omitted. The appropriation for gas and electric lighting was fixed at \$190,000, the price for street lamps fixed at \$20.50 per annum and electric lamps at 40 cents per night.

The bathing beach received \$1,000, and the public pumps \$4,000.

The disputed charities appropriations were agreed upon as follows: For the Emergency Hospital, \$12,000; for an addition to Columbia Hospital, \$10,000; for the National Homeopathic Hospital, \$8,000; for expenses of the Girls' Reform School, \$9,425; for child-caring institutions and the board of children's guardians, \$56,500. The provision of the Senate placing the management and control of the Freedman's Hospital under the board of incorporators was stricken out.

The recent ruling of Attorney-General Olney to the effect that the entire direction and control of the Freedman's Hospital and Asylum is vested in the Commissioners by virtue

of the act of Congress making appropriations for the past fiscal year, grew out of a question as to whether the transfer from the jurisdiction of the Interior Department extended to general control or only contemplated supervision of expenditures.

Superintendent of Charities Tracey, in his last report, recommended that the transfer of the institution to the jurisdiction of the Commissioners be completed, he being of the opinion that the clause in the appropriation act only contemplated supervision of expenditures.

The Attorney-General's recent opinion, however, holds that entire control was necessarily contemplated, and in view of this opinion no further legislation is necessary. In speaking of the appropriations for charities in the District appropriation bill, now in the President's hands, Col. Tracey expressed himself as entirely satisfied with the sums allotted, as in every instance the amount appropriated is identical with his recommendations.

For the enforcement of the provisions of an Act entitled "An Act to prevent the spread of scarlet fever and diphtheria in the District of Columbia," approved December twentieth, eighteen hundred and ninety, four thousand dollars.

That the ordinances of the late Board of Health of the District of Columbia, as legalized by joint resolution of Congress, approved April twenty-fourth, eighteen hundred and eighty, be, and the same are hereby, declared to have the same force and effect within the District of Columbia as if enacted by Congress in the first instance, and that the powers and duties imposed upon the late Board of Health in and by the said ordinances, are hereby conferred upon the Health Officer of said District, and that all prosecutions for violations of said ordinances and regulations shall be in the police court of the District of Columbia in the name of the said District: *Provided*, That said regulations shall not be enforced against established industries and the carrying on of any business therein mentioned, which is not a nuisance in fact.

H. L. E. JOHNSON.

A Word for the General Practitioner.

To the Editor:

"What the General Practitioner Should Know About Eye Diseases."

The above title has appeared at the head of numerous articles by as many authors within the last few years. It has recurred with such frequency as to nauseate the one for whom it was intended. A careful analysis of the articles oftentimes reveals a stupendous amount of ignorance and inexperience, either or both of which are reprehensible. They begin something after this fashion: "The object of this paper is to instruct the general practitioner what diseases and conditions of the eye he should send to an oculist and what the oculist is willing that the general practitioner shall treat." Then will probably follow a rehearsal of some cases where a general practitioner is held up to public view because of an error of diagnosis and treatment. Fortunately these cases are very rare in the oculist's practice, if from the practice of thoroughly informed physicians. They are too common if from the practice of those Ishmaelites, the itinerant and advertising quack. The articles above referred to then deal with the different diseases of the eye sometimes very elaborately, and before one is through reading them he is impressed with the irresistible conclusion that it is not safe for a general practitioner to treat any eye disease, and that he had better send all eye cases to the author of the article for treatment; for these articles are not primarily intended to be read by oculists, but by general practitioners and for this reason they very rarely appear in journals devoted exclusively to ophthalmic science, but in