

of the remoteness of our situation, and to us, many of whom were formerly residents of eastern provinces, it will be a pleasure to hear from our brethren on the other side of the mountains.

We have received a communication from Drs. Hassell and Wade, of Victoria, urging the formation of a branch here of the British Medical Association. We cannot urge too strongly the immediate establishment of such an institution in this Province. We believe this is the only province in the Dominion that has not yet formed a branch of this great association within its borders, but we trust that this shall not be said of us much longer. Those who have received the blank forms accompanying the letter should fill them at once and send them to the gentlemen we have mentioned. It is to be hoped at the next issue of the JOURNAL that something definite may be announced in the way of formation.

MEDICAL AND LEGAL FEES.

Dr. D. W. Montgomery, on retiring from the presidency of the San Francisco Medical Society, delivered a short address to his confreres and co-sectours, which is published in the *Pacific Medical Journal*. The following extracts will be read with interest :

The complaint of the member discontented with the fee-bill ran, that we showed marked favouritism to surgeons. 'Tis a matter deeply to be regretted that the services of a physician can never, from the nature of things, be so well paid as those of a surgeon. The services of a physician are less obvious, less ostentatious, less full of dramatic effect, and the world has been willing in all ages and in all countries to pay for dramatic effect. Furthermore, a surgeon can say, "It is necessary to perform an operation to cure you. The operation requires skill and experience, and it will cost so and so much." And he can add that "people being always more willing to pay for what they expect than for what they have had, you will please pay the fee before the operation is performed." A physician is unable to do this.

It may be urged that as this fee-bill is largely for use in the courts for the guidance of lawyers and judges, educated gentlemen, and presumably

appreciative of the value of professional services that the schedule ought to be raised to a degree more becoming the knowledge required, in order that the legal profession may allow fees to doctors in some measure consonant with the valuation they place on their own work. But, unfortunately for us, they do not take this view of the situation. A lawyer naturally tries to get all he can for his services, and a judge is usually inclined to allow a lawyer's demand, for, as Bryce says : "The judge who has recently quitted the ranks of the bar remains in sympathy with it, respects its views and desires its approbation." A physician, seeing his legal friend's success, makes a request before a tribunal for a comparatively modest fee, only to see it cut down.

It is all nonsense to say, as many lawyers do, that it requires a peculiar kind of talent, the legal mind, to be a lawyer, and that its rarity is the sole reason they receive, and justly, such enormous fees. All pre-eminent mental work is the result of aptitude in a particular direction, and if legal talent is the best paid it is because of some of the following reasons : they often make their bargains before commencing suit ; having won, they often have the money in their hands and can attach their portion of it ; and, best of all, the judge, whose word is practically final, and who is the only uncontrolled power in the commonwealth, is a lawyer, who, with our elective judiciary, may shortly be practising himself. We ourselves know that the successful physician must have much the same type of mind as the successful jurist, although developed on somewhat different lines ; he must have the same industry in looking up data, and in recognizing, appreciating and sifting out a fact. The lawyer's reflective faculties and the power of putting his thoughts clearly and concisely into speech or writing are usually better developed than with us, but, on the other hand, the physician's powers of observation are sharpened to the extreme. It often happens that a doctor, who it may be has an Apachelike power of observing and tracing symptoms, when asked to tell or write his experience makes a complete failure of it. Take the same man at the bedside or get him heated in discussion, and you will strike the true fire out of him. It is here where the value of the discussions in medical societies is most apparent,