

bilities of those who are engaged in teaching are also greater than ever.

THE APOTHECARIES ACT.

Now, as far back as 1722 there was an Act which empowered the Apothecaries' Company to visit the shops of all apothecaries practising in London and to destroy such drugs as they found unfit for use. In 1748 great additional powers were given to the Company by an Act authorizing them to appoint a board of ten examiners, without whose license no persons should be allowed to dispense medicines in London or within a circuit of seven miles round it. The celebrated Apothecaries Act of 1815 appears to have been the first Act to legalize medical practice and penalize unqualified practice, and this was really the start in this country of any regulations recognized by the State with regard to the education of apothecaries, the then general practitioners. The General Medical Council did not come into existence until 1858, the date of the first Medical Act. Between 1815 and 1858 there seems to have been a sort of "hiatus," but two important events helped towards the first Medical Act, viz., the establishment of *The Lancet*, in 1823, and the founding of our Association, in 1832, by Sir Charles Hastings, of Worcester, under the name of "The Provincial Medical and Surgical Association."

It will be interesting to refer to two or three clauses of the Act of 1815 before we proceed further, to Clause III., for example. The Masters and Wardens were empowered to enter shops of apothecaries and to examine drugs: "They shall or may search, survey, prove, and determine, if the medicines, simple, or compound, wares, drugs, etc., and any thing or things whatsoever therein contained and belonging to the art or mystery of apothecaries aforesaid, be wholesome, meet, and fit for the fare, health, and ease of His Majesty's subjects." Again, in Clause VII., we read: "Whereas much mischief and inconvenience has arisen, from great numbers of persons in many parts of England and Wales exercising the functions of an apothecary, who are wholly ignorant and utterly incompetent to the exercise of such functions whereby the health and lives of the community are greatly endangered, and it is become necessary that provision should be made for remedying such evils, be it, therefore, further enacted that the said Master, Wardens, and Society of the Art and Mystery of Apothecaries of the City of London shall be empowered for ever to superintend the provisions of this Act and carry the several regulations and provisions thereof in relation to the several persons practising the art or mystery or profession of an apothecary throughout England and Wales into full execution."