ity of our lay fellow citizens will be glad to avail themselves of services which can be best given by members of a well-trained and efficient and well-organized medical profession.

REPORTS FOR LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES

That the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association adopted the following resolution on May 17, 1927, indicates rather strongly a reaction against a common abuse:

"Whereas, There is a growing tendency on the part of some insurance and indemnity companies, as well as industrial concerns, to impose on physicians by requesting or expecting that more or less complete physical examinations, including written reports of same, or that a written expert medical opinion concerning patients shall be made for nominal fees or perhaps no fees at all, and that there is increasing tendency on the part of such organizations or concerns to shift responsibility by making erroneous claims that the services are in the interest of the patient or client from whom the physician cannot justly claim compensation; therefore be it

"Resolved, That it is the sense of the American Medical Association as represented by this House, that the members of the American Medical Association are under no moral or legal obligations to furnish professional services or expert professional opinion concerning any patient, or reports concerning professional services rendered any patient, to insurance or indemnity companies, to industrial concerns or their agents, or for the benefit of any third party, unless paid the customary fees charged by the medical men of that community for similar services rendered to private patients."

Few physicians have escaped receiving a courteous note from some life insurance company to the effect that "in the month of such a year you treated John Doe. Will you send us a report of your findings and treatment?" The question of responsibility to patient and of inviolability of confidence in these cases is often a nice one. Is the physician's report for his patient's interest or the insurance company's? The question whether this clinical work of searching back records and filling out a questionnaire should be a gratuitous service or not has evidently received frequent consideration by members of the Association, and has been explicitly answered in the adoption of the above resolution.

MEDICAL TESTIMONY IN CRIMINAL CASES

Factors in the Making of Reputations.—Whatever, in the eyes of the laity, affects the reputation of the regular medical profession should be of interest to those who believe in organized medicine. For we organize, to maintain as fully as possible, the highest standards of medical practice and conduct. If we would attain to our fullest efficiency with our fellow citizens, it is not only important that our general practice and conduct should measure up to proper standards, but that we should avoid unimportant issues and dilemmas, in which our participation is apt to be misjudged and bring reproach upon us, either as individuals or as a profession.

Or, to put it otherwise, if we are wise we will avoid those things in which so distorted a presentation of our professional participation may be made as to create in the minds of thousands of lay fellow citizens a distrust of our scientific knowledge or of our honesty of motives.

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A Recent Medico-Legal Case.—These and associated thoughts must have come to many of us, when in a recent homicide case in one of the courts of Los Angeles a battle of medical experts was placed upon the stage.

There is no desire here to go into the merits of that or any other of the recent cases that have had somewhat similar stage settings. Nor is there any wish to deny to any member of the profession his right to fight valiantly for scientific truth, as he sees it. It is justifiable to hold, however, that those members who engage in these medico-legal battles in criminal and similar cases should be very certain as to the whys and wherefores that make them parties to these controversial court scenes. For the lurid portrayal of their viewpoints in the daily newspapers is ofttimes anything but edifying, and certainly far removed from that atmosphere of decent respect, in which all physicians who believe in the ethical practice of the healing art desire the public to hold concerning the medical profession and its members.

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Where Rests the Blame for Newspaper Notoriety in Medico-Legal Cases?—It is quite true that the newspapers are largely to blame for much of this unfortunate state of affairs. When a human life is at stake before the courts it is quite as much in order for a physician to give just and honest battle in defense of that human life as it is for the same or a colleague physician to strive to save the life of a patient in private or hospital practice. Nevertheless, as individuals of mature years, we should hesitate and give careful thought before we consent to acquiesce in the requests of legal defenders or prosecutors, who seek medical opinion that largely or entirely will be in favor of their respective positions, or who will so word their questions as to give false impressions to court or jury.

It must be remembered that one thousand members of the profession, day in and day out, year after year, can give most conscientious and efficient and at times most altruistic service to indigent lay fellows, and receive for services so ren-